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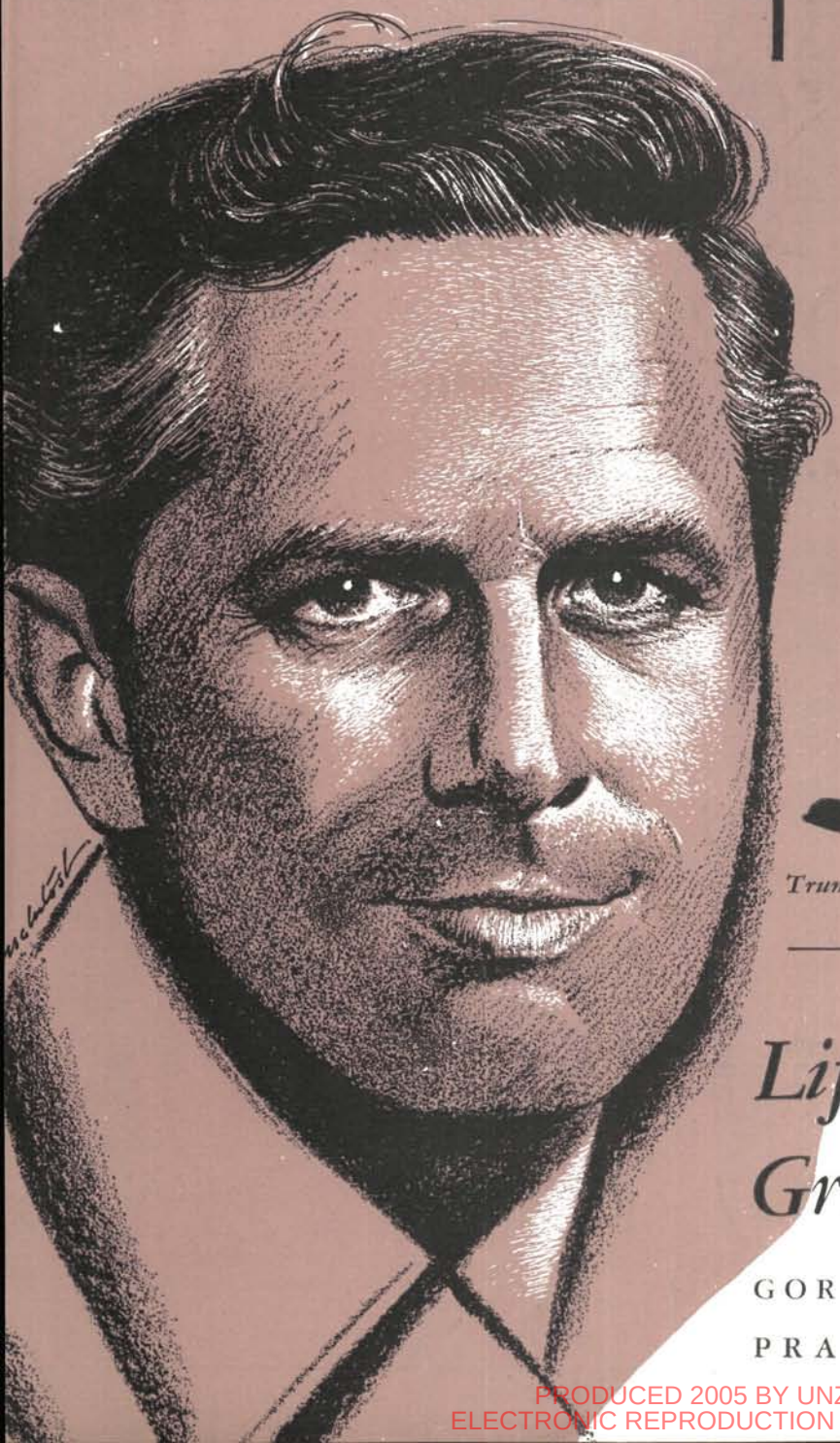

Truman Nelson, author of "The Sin of the Prophet."
(See page 19)

Life on 1952's Grub Street

GORHAM MUNSON, FLETCHER PRATT, ALAN C. COLLINS

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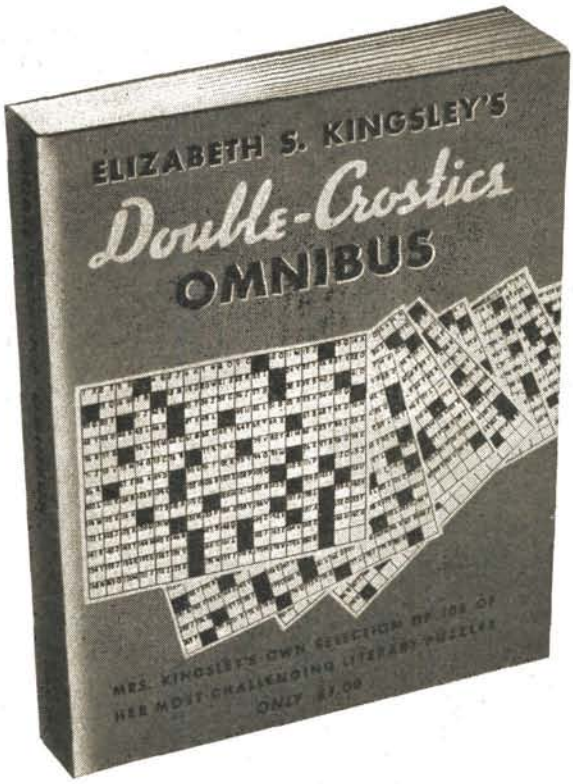

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The Saturday Review

February 16, 1952

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TRADE Winds

While Bennett Cerf is on vacation TRADE WINDS *is being written by the author of "Gentleman's Agreement" and "The Celebrity" —Mrs. Laura Z. Hobson.*

DESPITE THE AIR OF INNOCENCE in his final remarks last week, it was Bennett Cerf himself who nominated me to "keep the TRADE WINDS blowing." Everybody knows that Bennett loves a good joke. Let's hope this doesn't turn out to be his best one for 1952.

AN ISSUE devoted to writers and their problems makes me long for a subsequent issue devoted to critics and theirs. It might make nice reading, if the right psychiatrists wrote certain parts of it. No author with enough inner confidence to stick to a manuscript for months and years could ever be too shaken by adverse criticism that is judicious and balanced, but it's another matter when he's confronted by the kind of review known as a Killer.

The Killer is short, squat, and savage. Specimens are easy to find right

in your own living room: turn to the book section of almost any issue of *The New Yorker*. Here's an example, in full, except for names, title, and eleven words which might identify the novel's central character too clearly:

> A truly striking talent for the writing of family advertising copy is being lost through Mr.——'s quixotic devotion to his hero, ——, who should be speaking straight to us from every important billboard in the country, instead of being confined to three novels, of which this is the third.

In the very next issue of the same magazine was another Killer, this one operating on a young novelist. Here I have deleted the first thirty-one words, containing a summary of the opening situation, ". . . which is supposed to get the story off to a meaningful start but simply serves as a desperate intimation of the high-flown nonsense to follow. Mr. ———'s summer heat seems to have been produced by defective steampipes, turned on full. His people chatter banalities with an operatic self-confidence that is deadening when it is not deafening, and whatever honest impulse he started work with is soon buried under a heap of opinionated generalizations, heavy ironies, and stale social satire."

(It might be said here that both these novelists and both these books have been roundly praised by other critics, including some who sign their names to what they write.)

QUERY: Does a Killer serve any purpose other than those interior and dark ones generated by the critic's own raging juices? Whenever I see a Killer about a first novel, I am tempted to write at once to the wincing young author, to remind him that savageries by critics are not new, and that very few endure for more than five minutes except in the files of mutilated authors. One that did is quoted by Hesketh Pearson in his life of Dickens. Commenting on a history of Philip II and Philip III of Spain, written by a Dr. Robert Watson, Thomas Carlyle, who had a few raging juices of his own, wrote, "An interesting, clear, well-arranged, and rather feeble-minded work."

But, at least, Carlyle was Carlyle.

Incidentally, and by the way of sideswipe, I think *The Saturday Review* has recently given house room, in its FICTION NOTES, to some near-Killers of its own. I can only hope that dispossess notices will go out soon.

My favorite example of contemporary criticism can now, as they say, be revealed in print for the very first time. John Hersey's eldest son, a bright young man of ten, recently listened in miserable silence to his father's emphatic opinion that most comic books were trash, filled with

blood and corpses. Pressed beyond endurance the young man finally burst out, "But look at the trash *you* write. Look at the blood and corpses in 'Hiroshima'."

THE RECENT FULL-PAGE AD of the Book-of-the-Month Club captioned "Profile of a Cultivated Person" attracted me

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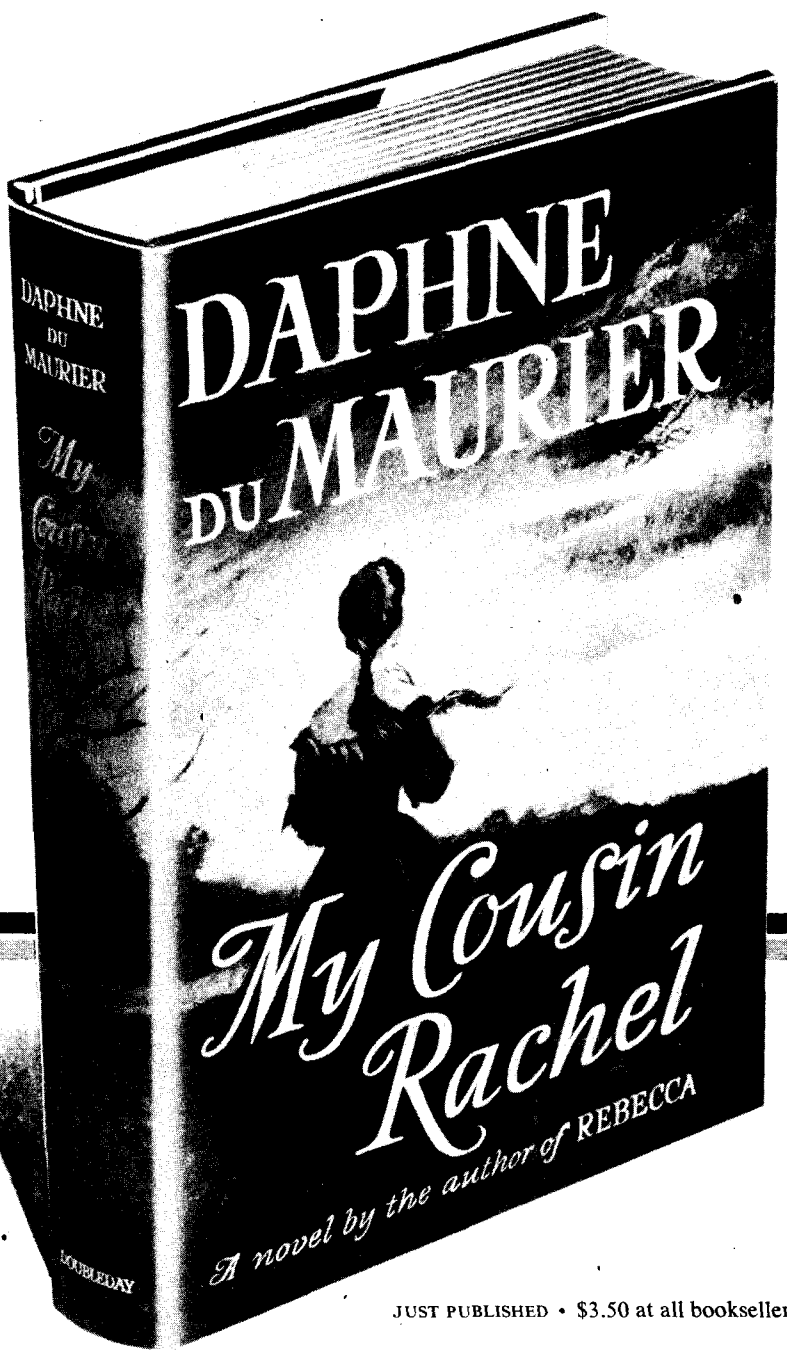

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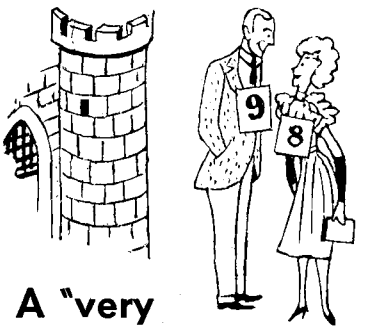
forcibly. It shows an outline of a face belonging to (presumably) one such; just inside the outline are the titles of twenty-five books, typographically arranged to follow his reassuring features. The admonition to "check the books you fully intended to read and then failed to read" sent my docile hand straight to a pencil, but then, being either absent-minded or just plain cantankerous, I checked the ones I had fully intended to read and *had* read. I come out having a sturdy eyebrow, the tip of a nose, no upper lip at all, and a mighty sketchy chin.

JOHN STEINBECK, nearly three years ago, phoned a man he scarcely knew and asked him over to his house to discuss an idea. The man was Elia Kazan, brilliant and incorruptible director of "Death of a Salesman," "A Streetcar Named Desire," etc. "I've been reading the diaries," Steinbeck said, "of Christopher Columbus, and I'm thinking of writing a moving picture about him. I've been hoping—"

Kazan interrupted. A picture about Columbus, starring Frederic March, was at that moment being shot in England. The talk drifted on, a little painfully, to other matters, until it came to Mexico and the Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata, whom Steinbeck calls "one of the strangest and greatest men of our time."

Suddenly both men were fired with the same conviction: a stirring motion picture could be made about Zapata's life and death. Soon Steinbeck began an original screenplay for Kazan to direct and Darryl F. Zanuck to produce. For more than a year he wrote and rewrote, and rewrote again, before he was ready to turn in what the movies call a final shooting script. Kazan cast Marlon Brando as Zapata, and in the spring of 1951, on the Texas border of the Rio Grande, the making of "Viva Zapata!" began.

About that time, Jerry Mason, editor of *Argosy Magazine,* which used to be a pulp, heard about the project, read the screenplay, and had an idea of his own. Mason believes that new techniques can be developed to report on great movies, going far beyond the usual three- or four-page skimover via captions and stills. He called Steinbeck. Would the author now translate his screenplay into a long novelette for *Argosy*? It would be illustrated, not by handouts from a publicity office, but by original photographs taken on location by Sam Shaw and a special camera crew, who had done the same sort of thing for an earlier Kazan picture. For various reasons, Steinbeck preferred to have somebody else do the transforming, and Mason turned to another novelist, Merle Miller.



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—CHARLES POORE, *N. Y. Times*

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Working from shooting script, a highly specialized and elliptical business, Miller had to find ways to convey to the reader a hundred things the screen would flash to the audience, and to cover the dissolves and fade-outs the cameras do so handsomely. His finished manuscript ran to fifteen thousand words; fifty photographs appear throughout the text; thirty-three pages of the magazine, including the cover, are devoted to "Viva Zapata!"

You can see for yourself how it all came out in the current issue of *Argosy*. I hear that Steinbeck and Kazan give it very high marks. Twentieth-Century Fox printed a million copies of the Zapata section to be given out, when the picture is released this month, to people who have just seen the film. As for the picture itself, John Steinbeck has publicly called it "one of the most exciting films I ever saw . . . savagely directed by Elia Kazan, played fanatically by Marlon Brando."

I can't wait to see it.

DISCOURAGING NOTE to new authors: Of the two thousand members of the Authors' Guild, more than half make an annual income of less than $3,000, from all forms of writing. The members of the Authors' Guild are, by and large, the most successful writers in the U. S.

Encouraging Note to new authors: *Collier's*, the *S. E. Post*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *McCall's*, and other large national magazines, now pay a minimum of $850 for a first short story by a new writer. The Curtis Group (*Post*, *Journal*, *Country Gentleman*) automatically raise the check to $1,000 for the second story, $1,250 for the third, fourth, and fifth, and $1,500 for the sixth. After that you do your own bargaining.

AT THE MOMENT, Bennett Cerf is browning himself on the grass beside the swimming pool of La Quinta, a not

underprivileged resort about eighteen miles east of the increasingly gaudy village of Palm Springs, Calif. I just had a picture postcard from him, complete with Technicolor, neon lights, and cryptic message: "A sadist, Pop, is somebody who's kind to a masochist." Sent airmail, special delivery, it arrived on the day that was final, final, final deadline for this column.

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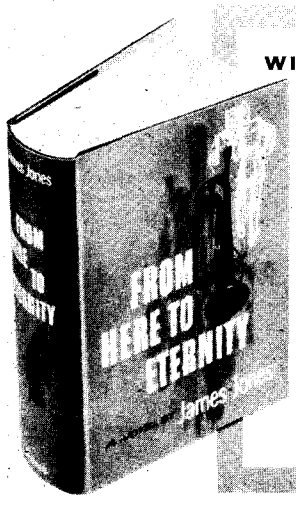

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Q. Where is The Reader's Digest bought and read?

A. In every country where people are free to read what they choose—58 by actual count. In addition, smuggled copies are read by thousands behind the Iron Curtain, frequently at serious personal risk.

Q. Where do the articles in the International Editions come from?

A. Every article has first appeared in the American edition of the Reader's Digest. More often than not, the same articles which were most popular in Kansas City and San Francisco turn out to be most popular also in Buenos Aires and Manila. *The Digest has proved that the basic interests of intelligent men and women are alike the world over.*

Q. Who are the 55 million readers?

A. In the United States, more college-trained and economically well-off men and women read the Digest than any other magazine. *Any one issue is read by 52% of all Americans who have attended college.* Sixty-one percent of Digest readers are high school graduates, though only 36% of the American population in the same age groups have finished high school.

Surveys show an equally high educational and economic level among readers of all the International Editions. In France, for example, more than twice as many people who are college-trained—more than twice as many of the well-to-do—read the Digest than any other magazine. The same holds true in Japan, Norway, Canada and virtually every country where the Digest is published. *Digest readers have more education—have more money to spend than those of any other widely circulated magazine in the world.*

Q. Why is the Digest so popular among leaders in all walks of life?

A. Because each issue contains a wealth of ideas that stimulate thought and conversation. Because each issue is packed with material that extends mental horizons, quickens the imagination, whets one's curiosity. Because each issue gives one a keener zest for life and a sharper appreciation of the fine art of living.

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30th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE—February 1952

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The READER'S DIGEST—Pleasantville, N. Y.

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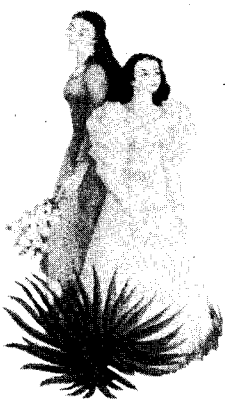
Fiction has reputedly lost caste in this improvement era of the how-to-do-its

These three novels are not instructive; they furnish the mind with new circles of acquaintance. Some of the faces are nearly recognizable, some of the settings will be visited only in this company, all of the relationships invite a richer comprehension. **SYBIL** by Louis Auchincloss offers no formula for successful marriage, but the reader, judging the improbabilities of an easy happiness for a woman of such a subtle mind may feel a sense of illumination for the problems of the near-Sybils that he knows. Louis Auchincloss writes with a lacquered precision about the concentric circles in New York society. And Sybil, herself, moving in erratic orbit, touches the imagination. A national best seller, $3.00. **MITTEE** by Daphne Rooke. Mittee and Selina, delicately drawn, stand forth from the primary colors of a South African backdrop. Here the complexity lies in their dual relationship to a third — husband of one, lover of the other. Mittee and Selina lived out the violence and idyllic happiness of this life in Africa, but their story is a timeless one of gentleness and terror, of the confidence of great beauty and of lives confined by racial heritage. Daphne Rooke tells this story in a spell of color and caprice. A Book of the Month Club selection, $3.00. **THE PILLAR** by David Walker. The third novel is of six men arbitrarily chosen by the fortunes of war to live within the narrow boundaries of a prison barrack room. The walls of this room exist as potential points of departure; the men are escape-ridden. In this story time is the elusive challenge. In each man's consciousness the past continually presents its individual problems for solution, the future demands a communal plan woven from individual effort. As you read you will come to know these men better than they know themselves, almost as well as they know each other. These novels offer, in place of recipes, three avenues of thought. $3.00.



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EDITOR'S NOTE: *In a recent talk to members of the Publishers Ad Club of New York City, and in his editorial this week, the editor of* The Saturday Review *points out that recently issued reports on the state of the book business barely mention the author. As a start at author-representation in the current discusson of what's wrong with the book business, the editors of* The Saturday Review *sent a questionnaire designed to elicit data about the economics of authorship to 150 writers who had books published between September 1950 and September 1951. The text of this questionnaire is printed on page 12. Information drawn from the replies is summarized in the article below by the undersigned, who is himself an author as well as an editor for a publishing house. Fletcher Pratt follows with an account of his free-lance career in the practical and instructive vein of Anthony Trollope and Arnold Bennett. Finally, Alan C. Collins, who in a recent talk at Hunter College defined his own role of literary agent as a "protective man" for the author, points out that authors have held the royalty line but need tax relief.*

—GORHAM MUNSON, *Guest Editor.*

LIFE ON 1952's GRUB STREET

1. The Condition of the Writer

GORHAM MUNSON

HOW many would-be authors are there in the United States today? Approximately how many manuscripts circulate each year in the literary market place? How many part-time selling writers are there? How many writers hold salaried writing jobs like reporting, government information service, advertising copywriting, etc.? How shall we define a writer? Shall we include the part-time author of a college text, the occasional contributor to a magazine, the writer of a manual?

Perhaps some of the problems of the writer in America arise from the fact that it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain precise answers to those questions. Indeed, the writer is even more handicapped in this respect than his colleagues of the literary world, the publisher and bookseller, who don't know beans about the facts behind their current plight.

Here are a handful of statistics about authorship, almost but not quite taken out of a hat.

There are about one million Americans who are intending writers, but the intention of many of these is weak. There are, shall we say, about 70,000 Americans holding down salaried writing jobs. There are somewhat more than 10,000 self-employed professional writers supplying the major markets of books, stage, screen, magazines, radio, and television. These major markets distribute about thirty million dollars a year to these 10,000 or so professionals.

Now we come to a precise statistic: there were 8,765 *new* books published in 1951, including textbooks, technical books, mail order books, and other classifications you won't find represented in general book stores. All of the authors of the new 1951 books had hopes that their titles would sell. How did they fare? We grow imprecise again. Somebody once said that only about one hundred new books in any given year will eventually achieve a sale of ten thousand copies or better, and we have all parroted this "guesstimate." We have all said that only about one hundred authors of new books each year will realize from their sale $3,000 and upwards—in a few instances, very much upwards; the rest will earn from, say, $500 to a couple of thousand for their work.

In an effort to reduce by a little the vagueness that surrounds book earnings, *The Saturday Review* sent out a questionnaire (given in full on page 12) to 150 authors of hard-cover books published between September 1, 1950 and September 1, 1951. The list of authors addressed is a guarded secret, and they were asked not to sign their replies. At date of writing this report, 42 replies have been received —an unexpectedly large percentage.

The first surprise in analyzing the data came from the reported sales. Seventeen of the forty-two authors —roughly 40 per cent—reported that their books had sold more than 10,000. The highest sale was 100,000, the next highest was 37,500. True, the statistics were a bit wobbly—good round figures not exempt from the suspicion of exaggeration, a common failing of authors, and sometimes minor book club sales seem to have been included in the total. But the sample seems to show that the old saying, "Only about 100 titles a year sell more than 10,000," is out of date.

The report of earnings from these books, *excluding any share received from sale of subsidiary rights,* was another story. Let us draw a line and let that line be the average income of families and single persons in the USA, which according to President Truman's 1950 Economic Report was

Gorham Munson is vice-president and editor of Hermitage House, Inc. His most recent book is "The Writer's Workshop Companion."

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$4,231 a year. How many of our authors earned book royalties on their last book above that line and how many below it? Only ten were above. The rest ranged from $500 to $4,000. This prepares us for the answers to the question: Do you earn your livelihood entirely by writing books? As would be anticipated the majority—twenty-nine of the sample forty-two—said they did not. Thirteen said they earned a livelihood from books. How about a livelihood earned by writing for a number of media including books? Twenty-seven did that. How did the others get along? Nine were teachers; one was a medical doctor; one confessed to being supported by a husband; several were editors; one lived on personal investments; others lectured.

Here we can draw a conclusion that will stick: *to write a book most authors have to subsidize themselves*—by writing for other media or by taking other jobs.

And they have to be fairly good at subsidizing themselves—because the writing of a book usually requires a substantial investment of time. Twenty-four of our writers reported that they had invested one year or more in doing their books. Over three years, says one; leisure time over a period of ten years, says another; two years of research, not full time, and one year of writing, full time, says a third; two years off and on, says a fourth; one year plus three months of travel for research purposes, says a fifth. Only two writers reported spending less than six months in doing the book, and one of these explained that it was an 18,000-word humor book knocked off in thirty-five days.

THE question naturally arises, are book authors exploited? Is that why their income from books falls below the average income of American families and single persons? The time was, in the long transition from the patronage system to the democratization of literature, that authors were exploited. There was justification for the bitterness of Ambrose Bierce when he declared that "a publisher is a man who drinks champagne out of an author's skull." But the fault was as much that of the exploited as of the exploiter. "The publisher and the theatrical manager," Arnold Bennett was observing as recently as 1914, "have been subjected to a special and grave temptation . . . The publisher and the theatrical manager deal with what amounts to a race of children, of whom even archangels could not refrain from taking advantage." But the advent of the literary agent, according to Arnold Bennett, changed all that.

Today, as *The Saturday Review* pointed out in the foreword to its questionnaire, "the average ratio of authors' royalties in profitable companies is not quite 19 per cent of sales income, excluding sales of subsidiary rights." Can publishers afford to pay more? Perhaps because the questionnaire's foreword went on to give a thumbnail picture of the book-publishing industry, no author raised the cry of exploitation in royalty rates. Here's the picture: "1) dollar volume of business has remained static since 1947; 2) costs have risen steadily; 3) the profit level, after taxes, of general book publishing has declined, dropping in 1950 to 3 per cent, including all income from subsidiary rights." Clearly, the author, the prime supplier of the book business (without his manuscript there is no book to be manufactured, published, and sold) is selling to a market that has a small and diminishing profit margin. This is a fact that the author-as-merchant must reckon with.

As the questionnaire's foreword said: "The general state of the bookstores is also of great concern to the writer. Statistics are inadequate but the Temporary Committee on Book Trade Outlets of the American Book Publishers Council has recently concluded that 'the present earnings of bookstores are barely enough to keep them in business.'" Last May the president of the American Booksellers Association declared that the average retail bookstore profit after taxes appeared to be about ¾ of 1 per cent of gross. He also said that seventy stores of the ABA membership had gone out of business the previous year. This has great significance for the author-merchant, for it means that the ailing market he supplies, the publisher, is in turn distributing the manufactured product to outlets that are barely maintaining themselves.

For this reason, the questionnaire asked for suggestions for improving the lot of book publishers and booksellers. They may be in need of creative ideas, but apparently they are not going to get them from authors. Many of the respondents left blanks. The following are some of the comments offered. To publishers: stop regarding book clubs and bookstores as the only outlets; seek new and cheaper methods of reproduction; break the deathgrip of unions on the printing industry; enlarge the reading public; publish in good paper editions (like the French) and sell for $1 or $1.50, then publish between hard covers those that test well; books should be better

Saturday Review Writers' Questionnaire

Below are the fifteen questions sent out to a confidential list of 150 authors of books published between September 1, 1950 and September 1, 1951. It is suggested to other writers that if they answer these questions for themselves, they may gain a clearer idea of their economic placement in the book business.

1. Do you feel that your last book should have sold more in its original hard-cover edition than it did? By how much?
2. Of what classification (fiction, self-help, philosophy, etc.) was your book?
3. If its sales failed to attain the totals you believe it deserved, where would you place the blame? On the publisher, bookseller, reviewers, the public, competition of rival media, or what?
4. Have you any complaints against your publisher? (Please do not name him.)
5. Do you earn your livelihood entirely by writing books?
6. Do you earn your livelihood by writing for a number of media?
7. If not, how do you supplement your income from writing?
8. In recent years have you taken any reduction in royalties?
9. How many copies did your last hard-cover book sell? What were your earnings from it, not counting any share you received from sales of subsidiary rights?
10. Approximately how much in time and money did you invest in writing your last book?
11. What advance against royalties did you receive?
12. Have subsidiary rights (reprint, movie, book club, second serial, television, foreign, etc.) of your last book been sold? Which ones?
13. What suggestions do you have for improving the lot of writers?
14. What suggestions do you have for the improvement of book publishing?
15. What suggestion would you make for improving the bookselling trade?

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spaced throughout the year; publish fewer books; raise prices; higher standard of subject matter, less sex; better books; run an industry-wide campaign to make America book-conscious. To booksellers: enlarge the reading public; demand from publishers better, cheaper books; "bookshop clerks are usually inhuman prigs who feel it their duty to guide and instruct"; less emphasis on best sellers; stock and display a wider range of titles; secure better staffs with promise of tenure, they should have more kinship with books; have expert sales specialists to instruct trade in merchandising and set up sales clinics; educate the public.

I shall not attempt to evaluate these comments but simply note that the one that brings all parties in the book business together and reconciles them is: "enlarge the reading public." Author, publisher, and bookseller all want to get the volume of sales up. Here is the common goal. But how achieve it?

It seems, however, that not all authors are positive that their books should have sold more than they did. As many as twelve expressed themselves as satisfied they had achieved the sales they should have. The others were often emphatic in their estimates of the sales they missed but felt they should have obtained. Should have sold more by at least 10,000, says one; by about 2,000, says another; by 25 per cent, says a third; double, say a fourth and fifth. These dissatisfied authors might be surprised to learn that publishers and booksellers, looking at actual sales and thinking about intending buyers who didn't buy and potential buyers who weren't reached, would agree with the more moderate estimates of missed sales.

Who is to blame for books not selling in the quantity they should? Here again the poll was surprising. Two authors actually blamed themselves for not putting more into their books! One author blamed God, and two put the blame on general conditions. The competition of rival media like TV got off lightly; only five accused rival media of hurting their sales. Six put the blame on booksellers, eight on the apathy and stupidity of the general public, and eight on reviewers. Only sixteen blamed their publishers. (Publishers, in fact, received some warm tributes: "my relationship has always been pleasant and mutually trustworthy"— "I cannot be sufficiently grateful." One writer, however, went so far as to describe his former publisher as "a paper-back skunk in hard-cover coat.")

What are the faults of publishers?

(*Continued on page 47*)

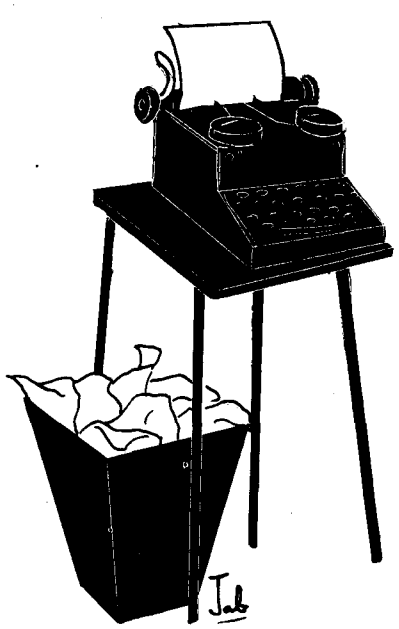
2. *The Double Life of a Book Author*

FLETCHER PRATT

IT IS impossible to approach the problems of the free-lance writer from any other than a personal angle, if for no better reason than that free-lance writers are individualists by definition. I got into the racket because there didn't seem to be anything else to do at the time. The precise motivation is less important for this discussion than the technique. A few attempts at fiction had demonstrated that it required a skill I did not possess, or—and I think this is frequent enough among young writers to constitute the general case—writing fiction represented uneconomic activity in the sense that it took so long to produce a salable story that the check for it failed to cover food and lodging for the period involved.

Now let us not avoid uneconomic activity. It is the writer's method of sharpening his tools, extending his horizons of skill. Every full-time writer is also to some extent a part-time writer, devoting a portion of his effort to ventures that will pay only at the second remove. However, it is important that he recognize the character of these ventures and keep them in a secondary place as far as the expenditure of time and energy goes.

Time and energy represent the writer's capital, which should produce —first of all—income. When I began free-lancing I possessed additional capital in the form of some knowledge of how a trade journal operates and some experience of how a newspaper story is put together. Of all the publications in the United States a good half are trade journals, and about half the remainder are newspapers. Between them they offer the beginning writer the best route to his goal, for although largely staff-produced, there is always room in them for the type of exterior material that represents reporting from an area where they have no coverage. The editor of an ice cream trade journal in New York, for instance, cannot know that a creamery in Atlanta, Georgia, has discovered a sensationally successful new method of packaging biscuit tortoni, and the editor of the Atlanta *Constitution* may be unaware that the Ice Cream Institute of America (if there is such a thing) has just awarded the creamery man its annual gold medal.



ON THE basis of these facts and in the knowledge that my writing technique was no more equal to reporting for the major magazines than to fiction, I set out as a free-lance. All libraries have directories of trade journals, and most of them have files of the major ones. Where there were such files I read the selected magazines carefully, trying to discover what manner of material they considered interesting and how it was treated. Where a magazine was not on file I wrote for a copy. Quite early in the game I discovered that it was also necessary to inquire whether they paid for copy. As soon as I found a trade journal that was using the type of material I could produce, I began looking for a story that would interest them.

At this point beginning writers always come up with one question—where do you get the raw material? The answer is everywhere. Personal conversation—people in any business are usually aware of something in the same business going on in the next block. Personal observation—a new clothing store has opened, and it strikes you that the selling methods

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Starting on Grub Street, Fletcher Pratt has become one of America's most widely read historians and naval authorities. He has written thirty-four books in all, his most recent being two juveniles. He was a pioneer in science-fiction.

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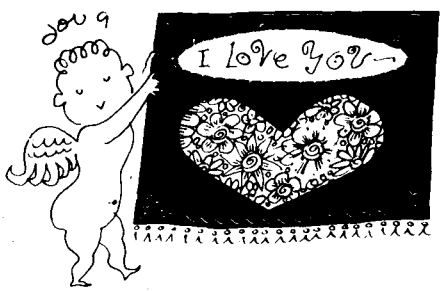
they are using are out of the ordinary. Newspapers—the small item in the back yard may not be of much importance to the readers of a city daily although of the most burning interest within the trade. The only requirement—and I am not an individual in this observation, other free-lance writers report the same thing— is an absolutely insatiable curiosity.

In the course of running down such facts there inevitably takes place what may be called a feed-back process; that is, what starts as a story for a trade journal will develop aspects that will fit it for a local newspaper or an even wider market. A grocer with a novel delivery system invites you to his home to discuss it, and you discover that he has one of the finest collections of early Greek lamps in America.

It should also be noted that "trade journal" is a very broad term. In my own, not atypical case, I discovered a demand for true stories of crime which was not only financially rewarding, but also opened the door into fiction writing. The readers of such stories, or at least the editors, expect the true detective story to approach the fictive, and it is incumbent upon the writer of such stories to discover what goes into a fictional detective story in the way of balance, dialogue, and suspense. At the same time, since he is very definitely not writing fiction, the facts are the overriding consideration. Good reporting will substitute for good writing until the writer's skill exceeds that of the reporter and he slips over into fiction— or something else.

IN my own case it was something else. In the years during which the free-lancing experiment started, the responses from various naval and military journals as to whether they were interested in copy were distinctly more cordial than the average. Moreover, what they wanted was historical articles, which could be worked up in a library at any time. So I started reading books on military history to familiarize myself with terms and techniques and to discover areas where further investigation might be profitable. The process is similar to

(*Continued on page* 54)



3. *On Improving the Lot of Authors*

ALAN C. COLLINS

THIS piece was almost finished. And a rather glum piece it was. For the twenty-five years that I've known anything about the book business it has, except for brief periods, taken a consistently gloomy view of itself.

But then there happened into the restaurant where I was hiding out for a solitary luncheon, one of New York's most distinguished publishers, also alone. We joined forces. For a long time we bemoaned the state of the book business from all angles. Then we got round to politics. Finally we began to talk of the books that were to come on the spring lists. Almost instantly our spirits began to pick up. We expanded. We emerged into bright, mid-winter New York sunshine and parted happily, each reasonably optimistic.

And so I have (in re-doing what I had first written) taken out some of the gloom, and will try to point out a few things I think authors can do to help themselves in particular, and the book business in general. I confine myself to the author who aims at making a living mainly out of writing books and to the business, not the artistic, side of authorship.

First, there is no doubt that sales of the average book have increased as against ten years ago. Author's royalties have correspondingly increased slightly, even though royalty rates have been "spread," and the purchasing power of the dollar has declined.

I do not think authors generally are fully aware of this. A little simple mathematics will prove the point. Assume that the novel that sold 5,000 copies at $2.50 in 1940, is now selling 7,500 copies in 1952 at a $3 price. Assume also that the author's royalty in the same period has "spread" from the 1940 rate of 10 per cent on the published price on the first 2,500 copies sold, 12½ per cent on the next 2,500, and 15 per cent on all sold thereafter, to a 1952 rate of 10 per cent on the first 5,000 copies sold, 12½ per cent on the next 5,000, and 15 per cent on all sold after 10,000.

On the basis of these figures the 1940 author received $1,400 in royalty on his five-thousand copy sale, while the 1952 author receives $2,437 on his seven-thousand-five-hundred copy sale. I believe further "spreading" of royalty rates should be vigorously opposed by authors, but on the basis of what's happened to date, the author hasn't come off too badly, and certainly much of the complaining that one hears about authors always being first on the publisher's chopping block isn't really merited, at least insofar as the royalty scale is concerned.

ON the other hand, and this is my second point, the author should do all in his power to press the publisher to turn back the industry's present attitude that there's no profit any more in the publishing of books. That there's no profit in publishing many of the books that are published today, who can deny? That there's no profit to be had in publishing the best that's being written and thought and discovered in our great age, I refuse to believe. What of the British publisher? He has survived and is surviving without book club bonanzas, with far less reprint income than American publishers have, and without continually putting his hand out for shares in any monies the author may derive from magazine, motion picture, and other collateral rights. That present-day publishers survive in fairly comfortable circumstances is obvious. That they cannot become millionaires has to do with a world of social and political unrest. So long as it is necessary to maintain present-day tax rates no publisher, author, nor any other citizen for that matter, will believe that his "take home pay" is an adequate return for the effort he expends.

The author has no union to protect his interests, as do the workmen who produce the elements that go into the physical book—wood pulp, paper, cloth, glue and composition, printing, and binding. When prices first started to skyrocket after the war, I think it's not unfair to say that publishers first thought of the authors' income as a means of "cutting costs." Only later, after prices of necessities had made

(*Continued on page* 45)

Alan C. Collins was formerly a newspaper reporter, a magazine editor, and book editor. In 1936 *he joined Curtis Brown, Ltd., as manager of the New York branch of the London literary agency. In* 1940 *he became owner and president of Curtis Brown, Ltd., New York.*

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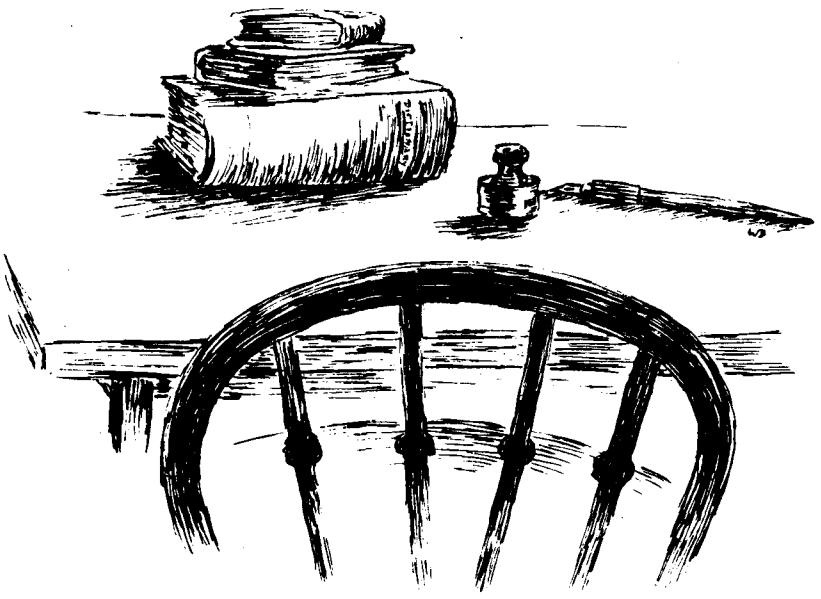

Prose of Promise

HARRISON SMITH

THE complaint that 1951 was not a good year for fiction is borne out, to some extent, by the fact that out of more than a hundred books by writers who had never before had a volume of fiction published in the United States, the editors of *The Saturday Review* can find only seven novels and one collection of short stories meriting an accolade for either achievement or high promise. Of these eight, five are the work of Americans. The literary scene last year was remarkable in another way since both in fiction and non-fiction the few books which received the enthusiastic approval of the majority of the critics almost immediately found top places on the best-seller lists.

James Jones's massive "From Here to Eternity" received more attention from the press than any first novel since "Gone with the Wind," and it has proceeded to outsell all the novels published since it appeared. It is not a work of art; it may not be an enduring book, but it was an eloquent and a passionate protest against an authoritarian army system in a time of peace. Its sustained vitality and narrative flow, the knowledge it revealed of the American soldier's days and nights, the originality of its conception as "the requiem and the epitaph of the common soldier," the individualist who must be crushed if the system is to endure, swept away the occasional violent attacks on the book for its use of army language and an exotic love story that seemed to many to lack reality. It was written by a man with that accurate memory for detail which marks the best writers, an angry man who had the inspiration to isolate his many characters on an island and to end his novel at the moment of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor when disunion and bitterness were dissolved in combat.

J. D. Salinger's "Catcher in the Rye" is in its way as American a product as "From Here to Eternity." A few of its chapters appeared in *The New Yorker*, and it has the delicate nuances, the wry humor, and the psychiatric touch that mark *New Yorker* fiction. It is about a tall and bewildered boy of sixteen who is dismissed from his third private school and hides out in New York in a state of physical and mental shock which makes it impossible for him to face his parents. The child in the man's body is an old conception, but Mr. Salinger gave it new life in avoiding the conventional clinical overtones. The boy blames no one for his loneliness or the accidents that befall him. His redemption by his younger sister, one of the most delightful little girls in modern fiction, is exquisitely achieved. The story is told in the first person, and it is the freshness and obvious authenticity of young Holden's language and his conceptions of the adult world that prevent the book from becoming either tragic or sentimental.

"Lie Down in Darkness" was the first glimpse that the critics had had of another talented novelist, William Styron, a twenty-five-year-old Virginian from Newport News. That he wrote with eloquence and power was undeniable, but it was also true that he reflected the despairing mood of so many of our writers who are unwilling to give their characters a sane or a reasonably happy life. All of the conventions are present, the switching back and forth in time, the irritating stream of consciousness, the plot within a plot, the influence of Faulkner and Joyce. Nevertheless, Styron had a memorable, if appalling, story to tell of an alcoholic lawyer married to a rich and neurotically bitter woman and loving only his younger daughter, who is corrupted and driven to drink and suicide by the spectacle of her parents' miseries. The pervading aroma of decay and hopelessness is accentuated by the undeniable brilliance of Styron's characterization and his eloquence, for his people live and stumble to their separate dooms with awesome certainty. Interwoven through this spectacular narrative is the halting journey of the dead girl in a hearse which breaks down and then is stopped by a congregation of Negro religious revivalists, which is obviously drawn from Faulkner's "As I Lay Dying." Mr. Styron spares his reader nothing in his long recital, but he also leaves no doubt that he is to be reckoned with in the future.

ALL but one of Hortense Calisher's fifteen short stories published in "In the Absence of Angels" appeared in *The New Yorker, Harper's,* and a few other magazines willing to accept the work of a sensitive and percipient writer. She has an extraordinary gift of being able to discover the essence of the heart and the soul of human beings, apparently at a single glance. The reader is immediately convinced of the reality of the troubles that afflict them and is conscious that there is no malice in her revelations, whether she has caught them when they are dying, impotent, in love, betraying their crassness in a bar, or ridding themselves of a newt which is living like a lively tapeworm in their insides. Miss Calisher has a fine sense for grotesque horror as well as for human failure. Her art consists, to quote one of her critics, "in a fas-

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tidious search for perfection of communication," the use of the right or the penetrating phrase, which has made her one of our best short-story writers.

It is safe to say that the most revealing and absorbing novel of contemporary China yet published is Stephen Becker's "The Season of the Stranger." It is an astonishing performance for a young man, not yet twenty-five, who had spent only one year in Peiping, for he seems to have absorbed through the normal five senses the odors, the pervading dust blowing from Manchuria, the rhythmic and complex language, the literature, and the habits and mannerisms of an ancient people who are in the process of violent evolution. Emily Hahn, an old China resident, may have stretched a point when she wrote that it is hardly fair to compare him with Malraux since Mr. Becker's novel is a better job than "Man's Fate." "The Season of the Stranger" is the story of an American teacher in the university who had become so Chinese in thought, manners, and way of life that he had dedicated himself to that tormented country. Becker's description of the mounting tension as the crushing tide of the Communist Army swept down upon the corrupt and impotent Nationalists is completely satisfying to the reader. Mr. Becker is no Communist and is able to understand the fatalism of the Chinese toward their latest conqueror. His hero "had a flash of pity for what was dying and a flash of fear for what was being born," and the final words of a Chinese student after Peiping is taken are, "When they stop giving us order and the food we earn we will turn against them."

THE author of the only English addition to this list of best first novels is no less a personage than the Most Reverend David Mathew, Titular Archbishop of Apemea and Apostolic Delegate in Africa. He has several historical works to his credit and a book called "The Steam Packet," so that it may not surprise anyone to discover he has written "The Mango and the Mango Tree," a highly conversational and oddly fascinating novel about eleven passengers and the steward of a French plane whose flight is interrupted by engine trouble on its way to a place called Douala. The Archbishop is a keen student of human nature, and he excels in his portraiture of the British, Dutch, Poles, Americans, and Negro missionaries who are marooned in the desert for three days. Some of them are reprehensible characters, and all

(*Continued on page* 42)

Eight Fiction Finds

ELOISE PERRY HAZARD

UNLIKE the new writers of three years ago, when we reported that only one, Norman ("The Naked and the Dead") Mailer, of ten new writers under discussion found himself solvent after first publication, and contrary to Gorham Munson's statement elsewhere in this issue that it is virtually impossible to make a living by the writing of books—by radio, TV, movies, magazines, yes, but not books—only three of the eight writers here discussed have supplemental income: one as part-time teacher, one as a wife, one as a priest.

JAMES JONES used reading as an escape even when a little boy and was 18 (A.D. 1939) before the realization struck him that writing is literature. Thereupon he eschewed the P. C. Wrenns for Hemingway, Faulkner, etc. Lightning hit again with "Look Homeward, Angel"—"it was *my* life, *my* environment, and I knew then what I was born for, to write." He enrolled in freshman comp. at the U. of Hawaii —this was at the beginning of his 1939-43 one-man war with the Army (Regular)—and tried out a postwar G.I. NYU course (both were too elementary) before concluding the only thing that helps a writer is to write. So he wrote "From Here to Eternity."

He has worked out an interesting philosophy about criticism, to wit: "It's amazing that no two critics see a book alike and none saw my book as I did. Everyone tries to make his own views universal, but actually each is founded on a personal opinion, so it doesn't matter what they say. When you realize that, criticism doesn't bother you. What *he* cares about is the opinion of his Scribner editor (originally the late, great Perkins) because he never knows if his writing is good until others read it. While in New York last week to accept the National Book Award for fiction Scribner's made him happy by approving the first three chapters of his second novel, on which he has slaved four months.

He loves—and hates—to write, but whether it goes well or ill he sits before his typewriter five hours a morning, believing the important thing for a writer is a system, not inspiration. He still divides the year evenly between Florida and his native Robinson, Ill., but, wherever, he fears disruptive influences—especially his passion for shooting— once he's deep into a book. "You know, concentrated life sort of thing," he elaborated with a tense laugh. One felt it was too true to be funny, and that the coils of the spring had best be slacked.

J. D. SALINGER shied at the publicity guns trained on him last spring before publication of "The Catcher in the Rye" and bolted for Europe, leaving behind only these scant bits of personal lore: "Born in New York City in 1919 and attended Manhattan public schools, a military academy in Pennsylvania, and three colleges (no degrees). A happy tourist's year in Europe when I was 18 and 19. In the Army from '42 to '46, most of the time with the Fourth Division. I've been writing since I was 15 or so. My short stories have appeared in a number of magazines over the last ten years, mostly—and most happily—in *The New Yorker*. I worked on 'The Catcher in the Rye' on and off for ten years."

Seven months of best-sellerdom have left his stance anent publicity resolutely *status quo ante*. "The fact is," he explains, "I feel tremendously relieved that the season for success for 'The Catcher in the Rye' is nearly over. I enjoyed a small part of it, but most of it I found hectic and professionally and personally demoralizing. Let's say that I'm getting good and sick of bumping into that blown-up photograph of my face on the back of the dust-jacket. I look forward to the day when I see it flapping against a lamppost in a cold, wet Lexington Ave. wind, in company with, say, the editorial page of the *Daily Mirror*." He *does* add, "Many of the letters from readers have been very nice."

For those anticipating a collection of his short stories—including the memorable "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" and "Mr. Wiggly in Connec-

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ticut"—there is disappointing news: "Not this year or next." Friends attribute his reluctance to conscientiousness and modesty: he thinks his stories aren't good enough. On new work he is giving out no advance releases: "I can't say what my short- and long-term writing plans are. For one thing, I'm not sure enough of them myself." Toil is spasmodic—16 or 18 hours a day when he's going well, but sometimes weeks without sitting down to his desk—and involves a deal of rewriting. The current scene of operations is Westport, Conn., where he lives alone, with a big American dog and a little English car.

James Jones, J. D. Salinger, William Styron, Hortense Calisher, Stephen Becker, David Mathew, Georges Blond, Clément Richer—"the only thing that helps a writer is to write."

WILLIAM STYRON has come to the conclusion that anything you say in print sounds silly to yourself when you read it but concedes that, since *he* is interested in people, *people* have a legitimate interest in him. Nevertheless, he's convinced New York is "not a healthy place to be in when you've just been published." So he will soon take off for Europe—"Montana or anywhere would do as well"—possibly settling down there for a time to write—"you never know." Then, probably, back to Virginia, though not to his native Newport News.

At the moment definite writing plans encompass only two short stories. He feels no compulsion to rush into another novel. "I am considering lots of things," he admits, "but it is not necessary to write anything immediately. Then you're not writing but being a writer."

The critical laurels he received seem to mantle his young (25) brow gracefully. Such remarks as "accomplished writing but . . . a synthesis of several identifiable styles," he finds a little unfair, since "there aren't any novels that haven't obvious influences. But I hope to go on and sort of shake off whatever influences I have. I'm certain I will as I go on writing, which I intend to do." Several other problems—finances, for one, and recall to Marine duty, for another—have been obviated, the former by his book's success (it is going into a 300,000 reprint edition soon), the other because of his "million-dollar-defect," a congenital cataract, deep in and no detriment to vision or appearance.

He has no hobbies but many interests: the Civil War; history in general; poetry—"a fine art, for which I don't have the patience"; politics—"I'm wildly interested in a way and wildly ignorant. I think I share qualities of both left and right but tend to become an intuitive liberal. I hate intolerance of any sort, but I'd never take any active part or fight for a political cause. I'm no fighter anyway"; and his Episcopal prep-school, Christchurch (Va.)—"I'm going to send my [prospective] kids there. Most beautiful place in the world, first of all. Then, it gives you something really strong and solid. That may sound trite, but I loved it."

HORTENSE CALISHER felt like a displaced person until she became a writer. The urge was strong from the beginning (first, to write poetry), but in spite of encouragement from Barnard teachers and "nice" rejection slips—"typewritten ones"—the frustration of the unpublished engulfed her. Now she knows the happiest thing that could happen is to work at the thing you like best and make it your life work.

Yet nothing of the previous 36 years became a total loss, neither the intense childhood scrutiny of human fauna—which furnished the rich upper-middleclass German-American family texture for her famous *New Yorker* "Hester" stories—nor adolescence, which she "took hard," school, college, the Macy year, NYC's Department of Welfare three, even the political air she breathed (see title story of "In the Absence of Angels"). Bridging pre- and post-success was a twelve-month dedicated to "not thinking of myself as a writer but sitting down and writing. I registered in Edmund Fuller's class near home (Nyack)—needing a deadline, criticism, a kind word—and the three stories I did for him sold." Thereupon she settled to a five-day-week writing schedule. Weekends she squanders on husband—engineer Heaton Heffelfinger—adolescent daughter, and 8-year-old son.

She early found the Scylla and Charybdis of the writer are the tendency to present oneself as the best possible kind of creature—"but it is no good to be dishonest with yourself in writing"—and enchantment with language—"you have to learn to keep your eye on the ball." Reviews she opines had best be forgotten, good or bad. Her family are the first consideration, but she would now like a little space of concentrated leisure such as a Guggenheim or a writer's colony might afford: "I need to think." But no strain is evident, only a quick responsiveness, good nature, and ready humor.

Like Hester, she progressed through childhood "her amulet a book." She read anything, so long as it was printed. Henry James's kind of writing interests her though she is not sure whether he exerted any influence.

Rereading her own stories she is sometimes hard put to separate fact from fiction, but having made one foray into fantasy ("Heartburn") she was a little startled to have her son call out one day, "Oh, mummy, there's a zebra in the garden." Her reply, "Tell your father," brought forth, "Darling, there *is* a zebra in the garden." She looked—and fainted. There *was* a zebra in the garden!

STEPHEN BECKER thinks that any old China hand who hasn't been in the Orient since 1948 shouldn't do too much talking about it. That's when he left, as the Communist armies were coming in and the Nationalists departing. One opinion only he will vouchsafe: "It is a little late for the Nationalist Government no matter how much it reforms, because it has become a terrible symbol all over Asia. Whether or not the accusations are true, they have been made so many years they are somehow convincing."

In "The Season of the Stranger" he took no political stand but merely attempted to give China's situation in late 1948 as seen "through the eyes of one who was not aware of any

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prejudices and had no ax to grind. It was almost a reportorial picture and so exciting no comment from me was necessary. Anyway, I was lost in it myself."

After severance from service in 1945, then 18, Mr. Becker initiated his own five-year plan of trial writing, redeemed by acceptance of his first novel as Harper's 1951 "Find" and short-story publication in *Harper's Magazine*. Then he knew he was "safe." Life during the plan also embraced completion of Harvard ('47), a year's study and teaching in China, marriage there to an American girl, and two years in France with ECA (his architect-wife was working with Le Corbusier). He now teaches at Brandeis University while Mrs. B. finishes her studies in Cambridge. Come June they will re-embark for France, with the extra baggage of a baby son.

Harper thinks their fledgling author has "enormous talent" and are eagerly awaiting his second novel. About that he is reluctant to divulge more than its scene: the USA. All sorts of political science appeal to him, though he finds French politics much more fascinating than American. Apropos of which he asks, "Where has the American Radical disappeared to? If there were any still around I guess I'd be with them." He loves music, collects records, and plays the piano for relaxation but with so little ability —sez he—that he is embarrassed even before his friends. From one of these friends comes this capsule description: "Tall, dark, and (sensitively) handsome. An easy, not voluble, talker, with a quick, unpoisonous wit and great appeal"!

DAVID MATHEW, Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church, for years has been carrying on a double, sometimes even triple, life. Following ordination in 1929, by then 27, the British-born priest has been successively an assistant at Cardiff's cathedral, chaplain of the University of London, titular Bishop of Aelia, auxiliary Bishop of Westminster, Apostolic Visitor to Ethiopia and Eritrea, and since 1946 titular Archbishop of Apamea and Apostolic Delegate to British East and West Africa. This present post, requiring almost constant air travel from his see at Mombasa (Kenya), furnished the background material for "The Mango on the Mango Tree."

Concurrently he has become a distinguished historian—his "The Jacobean Age" was exhibited at the Festival of Britain among the 100 representative books published in England 1920-50—written thirteen books—two novels, one biography, and ten histories—established himself as an authority on 17th-century England, lectured at many universities, including our Notre Dame, and Britain's Oxford, where he was Ford Lecturer in English History. Oxford was his own university, and he somehow managed to work in attendance at both Royal Naval Colleges—he served as midshipman in the Royal Navy, 1918-19—graduate research at Balliol (1923-24), and study as Preston Read Scholar (1924-25). He has garnered a Litt.D. from Trinity College, Dublin, and filled up any spare time with duties as conventual chaplain of the Knights of Malta (since 1936) and member of the Catholic Education Council.

The Most Reverend David Mathew, M.A., leads a double writing life, too: he is completing two novels, both dealing with the years 1946-51.

GEORGES BLOND wrote his first novel when he was 11. Coincidentally, his "hero was a young boy of 11," he recalls, "and in order to give him complete freedom I made him an orphan on the first page. At that period my life unrolled on the pampas and in mid-ocean—in imagination, of course—and Fenimore Cooper and his imitators were my gods." By the time he wrote "The Plunderers" his imagination had fed on the literary greats, and the critics were able to chorus "Epic," invoke the name of Melville, and elevate the book to Le Cercle du Livre de France.

The story of "The Plunderers" he says he invented, though it was based on something he read studying American Naval history: the creation of a special U.S. fleet to prevent extinction of the North Pacific's seals. That he found "appealing and interesting." Perhaps because the sea was in his blood. His maternal grandfather had been a navigator; his father also, before turning journalist; and he himself, Marseille-born (1906) and graduate of the Ecole de Navigation at Le Havre, saw War II naval service. The discovery of "Moby Dick" he remembers as "a high point in the history of my predilections." And, he adds, "let us not forget Conrad."

He and his wife—"we have no children, but seven god-children, whom we love well"—divide the year almost equally between Paris and shore or country. They are nature addicts and could not live all the time, "even luxuriously," in a city. Mrs. Blond is his "researcher, first public, and literary conscience." He appreciates, above all, her refrain "Write what you want, think neither of money nor success."

Mr. Blond thinks our conscience and sensibility are becoming planetary and cosmic, but that only by individual selflessness will the world improve, since governments and politicians are helpless—"this idea is without originality, but I believe it. I add that I am a Christian and a Catholic."

He is completing an historical and documentary book on the end of Hitlerian Germany (a sort of "Twilight of the Gods"). Then, a novel. "But," he protests, "I prefer not to discuss it in advance. I do not know what to say of my books. I am like the carpenter who brings the table he has just finished and says, 'Here is the table,' hoping that it will be found solid and suitable."

CLEMENT RICHER is well-known in Paris, his adopted city, while unknown in Martinique, land of his birth—or *was* until Carl Van Vechten, on a trip there last year, prodded the bookstores into stocking his six novels and giving this prophet honor in his own country. "They have heard of him now all right," Mr. Van Vechten reports, "and are very proud." Mr. V., who met the 37-year-old Richer in Paris through author Julian Green, is also responsible for bringing him to the Knopf fold and thus to an appreciative American audience. England, too, reads him delightedly.

For "Ti-Coyo and His Shark" Mr. Richer has evoked his life as a small Martiniquais, diving and swimming in Fort-de-France Harbor, climbing aboard the vessels at anchor, and listening to sailor yarns. That life ended when he set sail for France with his mother (both she and his great Dane died there of starvation during the war) and memories so rich that his writing—particularly of forest and sea —has been compared to W. H. Hudson's and harvested prize upon prize. What his early education comprised is not known here, but he presumably went to France for study, since he enrolled immediately at college in Moulins and later attended the Sorbonne and Ecole des Sciences Politiques. Even before his first novel (1937) he had founded a successful review, which became a casualty of war when he was drafted.

One of the sights of Paris these days is the exotic Mr. Richer—whom Mr. Van Vechten describes as "very handsome, very charming, and very amusing"—chauffeuring his cat, Gilbert, on the handlebars of his bicycle.

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Fiction. *In this issue, devoted primarily to the problems and accomplishments of the fiction writer,* The Saturday Review *is happy to be able to appraise the work of two first novelists of uncommon promise. Truman Nelson, who waited until he was thirty-nine years old before publishing a book, presents in "The Sin of the Prophet" a dramatic statement of the moral and legal implications of the Anthony Burns case, a* cause célèbre *in the pre-Civil War decade. The book appropriately enough, is published during Negro History Week. Jean-Baptiste Rossi, who waited only until he was nineteen to publish his first book, has handled a delicate theme with artistry and surprising maturity in "Awakening"* (page 20). *Readers who have pondered the problems of authorship detailed on the preceding pages will enjoy Lenard Kaufman's novel on the subject, "Diminishing Return"* (page 21).

In Revolt Against the Law

THE SIN OF THE PROPHET. By Truman Nelson. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 450 pp. $4.

By Richard B. Morris

THIS is a memorable book. It evokes a heroic past and poses a crucial issue for us today. Imbuing his own writing with the moral fervor of an earlier age, Truman Nelson in this, his first novel, has etched in black and white the stark, tense days in the Boston of 1854 which followed the arrest of Anthony Burns as a fugitive slave.

From the opening page these events assault the reader like the spring tide invading a beachhead. He can no more escape the big crashing waves than can the granite seawall which must sustain the impact. But when he closes the book he will have been exhilarated and cleansed by the salt spray. In sharing the ordeal of those who fought to free the hunted man he will have escaped, at least momentarily, from the fierce grip of that avarice which consumes and corrodes.

Under the pen of the author, Anthony Burns emerges as a symbol and a warning. This hapless Negro slave with the badly maimed right hand rings a bell in the night to arouse the consciences of men. A livid scar and a broken bone and a set of chains keep consciences afire in the face of that overriding sense of property which is reflected in the law. And, above all, one man sustains the battle, New England's major prophet, Theodore Parker, who was inspired by the words of the Book, "Go thou and preach."

Here was no "unreal, ghostly abstraction," which Daniel Webster had found to be the basis of agitation. To Parker, Anthony Burns was a fellow human being, one of the weak driven against the wall. To be returned South might mean a public whipping, the fate of Thomas Sims, whom a slave commissioner had sent back from Boston only a few years earlier, or almost certain burial in the oblivion of a cotton plantation. Already, in his corrosive sermon on Webster, Parker had castigated temporizing with slavery as a great betrayal. "The word *liberty* in the mouth of Mr. Webster," he had declared, "sounds like the word *love* in the mouth of a courtesan." His quarrel was less immediately with the South than with the "Hunkers," those Northern Unionists who would pay any price to keep the South from seceding, even to clutching the "hideous snake" of slavery in obscene embrace. Garrison and Wendell Phillips were willing to let the slave states depart in peace. Not so, Parker. Like Seward, and even before him, he had proclaimed a higher law above the Constitution and was prepared for the ultimate settlement of the issue by force of arms. "All the great charters of humanity have been writ in blood, and must continue to be for some centuries," insisted this descendant of a hero of Lexington.

The author removes the veil from the inner consciousness of Parker and his circle and helps us understand why they were in revolt, not alone against bondage, but against most intellectual and moral conventions of their day, and why they took up with every faddist reform, with transcendentalism, with temperance, with progressive education, with the communal program of Brook Farm, with woman's rights, with Bloomerism, with spiritualism, with mesmerism, with phrenology, with ameliorating the lot of the insane and bringing light to the blind, and, to a lesser degree, with labor reform.

To his portraits of the abolitionist circle Truman Nelson brings a sympathetic understanding and acute perception notably lacking in his dealings with their enemies. The upholders of law and order are paraded before us with the coruscating relief of a Daumier caricature—Ben Hallett, the unscrupulous district attorney, ready to exploit the Irish worker's distrust and jealousy of the free Negro for his own political ambitions; Loring, whose cowardly and tragic decision sending Burns back with his master almost immediately buried him in oblivion; Curtis, whose well-known antipathy to Parker made his presence on the bench in the trial of that reformer an outrage to judicial properties. But there is another side to the shield. Loring and Curtis, along with men like Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw, regarded slavery as a moral wrong and a status of degradation, but refused to be intimidated by pressure tactics. To them the issue was the supremacy of the courts. To their legal minds vigilantism for a good cause was just as evil as for a bad one, inducing a mob to attack a jail in order to free a Negro as reprehensible as inciting a mob to lynch a Negro. Regardless of how noble their cause, the apostles of direct action and "higher law" had fixed upon a course of irresponsibility which made John Brown and Harper's Ferry inevitable. Significantly, the firebrand Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who bore a saber scar on his chin as a reminder of his futile role in the Burns jail-break attempt, was equally irresponsible and incompetent when on that later occasion he planned Brown's rescue from his Virginia jail.

Here was an issue which Parker refused to face. Can the Government permit any minority to take the law into its own hands? Unfortunately, from the point of view of upholders of the sanctity of the courts the issue was tested by the infamous Fugitive Slave Law, part of Clay's compromise package of 1850. For that law furnished the accused with none of the rights to a fair trial and to due process which all free men enjoyed. Curtis, who sent back Sims, and Loring, who returned Burns to his master,

BOLT

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felt that the law left no alternative.

But Mr. Nelson's own outraged conscience cries out against the evil of social inequality even where it is deaf to the need for a government of laws not of men. He is inspired by the observation of Thoreau, prophet of nonresistance, that a very few men "serve the state with their consciences also; and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated as enemies by it." At the end Parker exhorts us, though all the rulers in the world bid us to commit treason against man, let us not submit. In an age of statism, where ultranationalist values are paramount, Truman Nelson suggests that to be false to Ahab and his painted Jezebel does not constitute betrayal. The only betrayal that counts is to one's self and to one's faith in man.

This book is guaranteed to stir even those readers who may not be prepared to accept without question its total implications. Its narrative power, poetic feeling, psychological insights, and climactic grandeur assure it a deservedly wide reading public.

Religion vs. Love

AWAKENING. By Jean-Baptiste Rossi. New York: Harper & Bros. 244 pp. $3.

By Henri Peyre

NUNS have occupied an important place in French literature, if not always an enviable one, from La Fontaine's salacious tales to Diderot's study of persecution and lesbianism. The conflict between religion and love, which seemed to some early Romantics pregnant with dramatic possibilities, is not a very popular one with modern writers. That conflict is sketched in the final pages of the present novel, but easily resolved in favor of human passion.

It took extraordinary tact, in a writer still in his teens (Rossi was born in Marseilles in 1931 and published this first novel in 1950 as "Les Mal Partis"), to avoid the obvious perils of a love story between a nun of twenty-eight and a schoolboy of fourteen. This novel is in no way indelicate or embarrassing. The restraint will be called classical. The words which the British critics used to characterize it, when it appeared in England as "The False Start," were those of innocence and fundamental purity. A boy, in a French Catholic school, is described with his boyish interest, his studies, and the delight in pranks and rebellion against the teachers familiar in pictures of French schools, where "progressive" laissez-faire hardly seems to have much place. In the course of a charitable visit to the poor in the local hospital he meets a beautiful nun. He reforms his behavior at school so as to be allowed to go out and meet her again. She, who had entered the order without a strong vocation but with an ardent faith, realizes the void in her life. Her loving and her motherly instincts are allied together to help her forget her vows.

They kiss one afternoon in a church, in a scene which disregards truth to life in provincial France rather cavalierly. Their love is soon fulfilled. The year is 1944, when France is being liberated by the Allies and occasionally bombed. But nothing counts for the two lovers, who defy the spying and scandal of the villagers in the country place where they have taken refuge for the summer. But truth soon is out. The nun refuses the prayers of the Mother Superior and clings to her boy-lover. The boy is torn away from her by his parents and escorted to a remote boarding-school. The parting scene is moving. Nothing more is said. The boy and nun twice his age were "les mal partis" in life. He will forget. Her own future remains shrouded in silence. But she has loved and lived.

There are a few lapses into the sentimental in the book and some clumsiness in the conversations between the two lovers. But the characterization of the adolescent is excellent, the atmosphere of a dull bourgeois family and of the school is well rendered. The love story is told with amazing skill and poetically and delicately throughout. Radiguet's "Devil in the Flesh," with which "Awakening" inevitably invites comparison, was more sophisticated, more cruel, more lucid, and better rounded off. But Rossi makes a startling debut with this book and must be watched as one of the promising young novelists of France whom the Fall issue of *Yale French Studies* has just presented under the title "What's Novel in the Novel?" He is not an Existentialist, he is not a metaphysician writing a symbolic tale, he does not stifle his readers under a gag of words, he is neither a homosexual nor a sado-masochist. He is just a clear, gifted, romantic storyteller.

THE AUTHOR: Truman Nelson, 39, arrived obliquely in the writing lists following the sort of protean experience—Macy clerk, factory foreman, actor, etc.—he finds disgustingly old hat in author biographies. His first detour led him to the public library—after the Lynn, Mass., high-school principal suggested he was wasting his own time and the state's money occupying a school desk—and into the mental arms of GBS, O'Neill, O'Casey—and Joyce, who gave him such a no-more-worlds-to-conquer complex he was completely put off writing novels for years. But the dramatists stimulated him to try acting—briefly, with a Shakespeare company, the Federal Theatre, and Orson Welles's Mercury Theatre—and then playwriting. Ultimately the gamble of theatre production gave him pause—"you have to have $200,000 and a lot of actors falling all over themselves"—and he, instead, attempted a fictional technique based on that of the Shaw-O'Neill-O'Casey dramas, "with the characters always in motion either through physical movement or emotion." The resulting novel mellifluous-voiced Mr. Nelson likes to think of as an "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of the conscience, a sort of "you wrote a declaration of independence, now are you going to live up to it or aren't you" challenge. From Thoreau derived his theme—"Thoreau's like a deep well for me; everything I've written came out of the well, and there is a lot more water"—and his present prime interest, the Transcendentalists. A second novel, on the Brook Farm experiment, is burgeoning; a third, about Wendell Phillips and woman's rights, projected. All together they will form a trilogy. Most of Mr. Nelson's reading is keyed to his writing—currently Francis Bacon and Fox's "Book of Martyrs." Extracurricularly Arctic adventures fascinate him, in which "if you don't bury a chocolate-bar halfway to where you're going you can't survive; that is really backing life into a corner." Contemporary politics he's given up as too confusing; he thinks the great lack is faith in man, which needs perspective and is impossible today. A propensity for talk he considers his greatest fault: he's sure he's talked away four or five books already. He lives in Salem, Mass., on the top floor of one of its Federal mansions, which he helped restore with his own hands. Washing dishes he can look out on Roger William's church and ponder that "practically everything of liberalism came from Williams or was said by him at one time or another." —E. P. H.

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Drama of Emotions

MITTEE. By Daphne Rooke. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 312 pp. $3.

By Oliver La Farge

IT is a delight to run into the work of a novelist who recognizes that novelists are first and foremost storytellers, who has the gift of storytelling and the love of it, and thus endowed produces a tale to be read for simple pleasure. Miss Rooke certainly has this view and these qualities. I picked up her book with mental reservations and doubts concerning stories of South Africa larded with exotic Boer words and strange folk-stuff, but I read it enthralled.

It is writing without tricks or affectations. It is just good, skilful storytelling—something one does not find every day. The publishers, to judge by their blurb, think that the principal character is Mittee, the wilful, frivolous, courageous aristocrat. Most readers will agree that the main character, by a narrow margin perhaps, is Selina, Mittee's "colored," that is, mulatto servant and friend.

Selina tells the story in the first person. Avowedly, she aims to tell Mittee's story, but in so doing she inevitably reveals herself little by little. This revelation holds the reader ever more strongly and, consciously or unconsciously, must have been the author's chief interest.

The novel has plenty of action in the usual sense of the word—murders, rape, seduction, war, and insurrection—and it is packed with vividly conveyed but painless local color. Selina tells her tale with a blunt, strong realism in itself characteristic of frontiersmen and pioneers. Basically, however, the book is a drama of the emotions, centering upon the two women. They live in a man-dominated world and behave accordingly, but strong in various senses though some of the male characters are, this is a tale with two heroines and no hero.

A special interest in Miss Rooke's story is the gradual exposition of the relationship between whites, the intermediate mixed-bloods, and the Kaffirs or pure Negroes at the bottom of the heap, and the effect of this relationship upon the two upper levels. Miss Rooke grew to maturity in South Africa, she knows whereof she writes. She knows the intimate personal relationship that can develop between servant and master, the confidence, the genuine love—the kind of thing that our own Southerners so often cite as proof that an iron-bound caste system and enforced servility make everyone happy. She knows, too, the deception of it. She cuts quickly, neatly, through all the palliating sentimentalizations.

Daphne Rooke—"honey of a story."

The author does not preach at any time. She simply tells what her people think, feel, and do. In that telling she illustrates with unusual effectiveness the degradation which race-caste systems work upon the subjugated, and even more disastrously upon the masters. From this point of view, this novel, laid at the turn of the century on the other side of the world, has immediacy for us in the United States.

The blurb, again, suggests that "Mittee" is primarily a love-complication story, which it is not. A recital of its principal events might suggest mere melodrama, which also it is not. It is a full-bodied, well-rounded novel of character, and a honey of a story.

Lenard Kaufman—"an act of catharsis."

The Writing Business

DIMINISHING RETURN. By Lenard Kaufman. New York: Doubleday & Co. 285 pp. $3.

By James Kelly

WHEN a novelist writes about the life and hard times of a novelist, as Mr. Kaufman does in "Diminishing Return," he is not likely to feel a notable detachment. Warming to the subject, he may turn his story into a fictional forum from which to pay off rankling grudges and lampoon literary mores. Indignant at bare-faced exploitation of fellow artists, he may find some pretty acerb things to say about practically everybody who is *not* an artist. Away with predatory publishers, agents, and critics! Away with unfeeling family and friends who always measure Art by Economics! In his anxiety to cover all aspects of writer vs. society, he may finally emerge with a tract instead of a treatment. Readers with more than passing involvement in the book world will applaud him as a fighting champion and wish that they had the nerve to express *their* private opinions so publicly. Others not so close to the arena may get the uneasy impression that the writing business, like basketball, is not so healthy beneath its glamorous make-up and wish that they might hear the other half of the debate.

Having produced "Jubel's Children," "Tender Mercy," and "The Lower Part of the Sky" while still on the young side of forty, Mr. Kaufman would seem to be the qualified man to write a novel about the trying out of thirty-nine-year-old Dillard Crowley, author of four novels and a book of short stories. Crowley, beset with two children, a nagging, long-suffering wife, sycophantic friends, and a promotion-minded publisher, is a gifted writer who will not compromise himself by writing pleasant books that will sell. He represents the artist at bay, caught in a Gauguin-like dilemma: My family or my work?

Despite the importance of the theme and Mr. Kaufman's evident sincerity and facility as writer and interlocutor, Crowley's struggle never seems to gather much steam. Maybe it is because he is too muddled and schoolgirlish to be credible as a serious writer. On the evidence submitted he does not fit the portrait of a genius. His tortures spring more from lack of money than from the rigors of creation, and one gets the impression that Mr. Kaufman himself is more interested in delivering his jeremiad than

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he is in Crowley and the non-lovable characters of his circle. "You got to be a sucker to be an artist. Everybody lives off you—agents, publishers, managers, dealers and, if there's anything left over, the government gets it. What's the percentage? You put your heart in your work and they eat your heart out of you. They don't let you live when you're alive and they don't let you rest when you're dead. You're in everybody's mouth and every fool has a right to say you're a stinker or a genius."

We meet Dillard Crowley first as he keeps a lonely vigil in Los Angeles, waiting for the New York reviews of his new novel. As before, the critics call him a capable writer about unsavory subjects, and he knows that there will be no best seller this time. Claire, his skeptical wife, threatens divorce unless he stops this writing nonsense and takes a job in her brother's firm. A group of idolatrous friends (some of Hollywood's unsavory subjects) offers (a) money, (b) psychoanalysis of him and his books to find out why the public will not buy, (c) love and sympathy. The low point comes when Boswell Waters, his peripatetic, personality-boy publisher, tells him to write salable books about lovable people or else. ("The trouble with the American literary scene was that publishers such as Boswell Waters were beginning to forget the author.")

It was the final humiliation, genius or no genius, and the novel's climactic scene finds Crowley hosting a party to celebrate the new job with his brother-in-law. All is in perfect order until a friend bursts in with the news of the sudden death of a proud old Shakespearean actor who was supposed to attend the party. Will the life of this uncontaminated man provide the *right* subject at last? Is that Businessman Crowley or Novelist Crowley sitting down at the typewriter—and who will win out?

"Diminishing Return" will set tongues to wagging. It offers racily styled, volatile entertainment for those with a healthy curiosity about publishing's dirty linen and how it feels to be associated with an unsuccessful author. Parents may use it to discourage the offspring who thinks he can become famous by writing. ("Our arts are populated with the know-it-alls who know nothing—the 'experts,' the prima donnas—while we, the artists with the well-furnished minds, who produce the art, are treated like necessary evils.") Unfortunately, not much more can be said for the novel, an act of catharsis by a goaded man who will probably feel better in

(*Continued on page* 44)

U.S.A. *To celebrate Negro History Week, we review this week a group of books concerned with the ordeal and dilemma of a vast number of American citizens. One of the crucial episodes in the liberation of the Negro is the subject of Truman Nelson's fine first novel, "The Sin of the Prophet," reviewed on page* 19. *But nine decades after he won his legal freedom many rights due every human being remain to be won, as J. Saunders Redding points out in his thoughtful little volume, "On Being Negro in America" (page* 23*). A few Negroes, Mr. Saunders observes, have unsuccessfully sought release in Communism; W. A. Nolan elaborates this theme in "Communism Versus the Negro" (page* 40*) . . . An American who joined the Communist Party and then reported to the FBI is Herbert A. Philbrick, who now reports to his fellow Americans in "I Led 3 Lives."*

Documentary of Espionage

I LED 3 LIVES. By Herbert A. Philbrick. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co. 323 pp. $3.50.

By Oliver Pilat

SPY literature is often packaged so romantically as to discourage discriminating readers. Herbert Philbrick's "I Led 3 Lives" suffers from a misleading title and an over-verbalized introductory chapter. It settles down eventually to a description of Stalinist operations in New England which goes well beyond the cops-and-robbers school, and which possesses considerable documentary value.

In discussing his three lives (citizen, Communist, counter-spy), Philbrick admits to schizophrenia. This is considered obligatory in espionage circles since Klaus Fuchs claimed to have compartmentalized his life with complete success. What Fuchs, and Philbrick, to a lesser extent, did, was to dissociate activities which caused some mental conflict. My maiden aunt does it when she plays canasta secretly despite pro-bridge bias in the rest of the family. Any husband does it who keeps a mistress without arousing his wife's suspicion. Philbrick was a genial man with a mild taste for being devious, but there is no indication in his account of insanity or near-insanity.

Herbert A. Philbrick—"being devious."

Though educated as a civil engineer, Philbrick was working as a direct-mail salesman when, in the spring of 1940, at the age of twenty-five, he got the idea of organizing a youth council in his spare time to agitate against war. As president of the resulting Cambridge (Mass.) Youth Council, Philbrick (and most of the members) swung gradually from pacifism to military aid for Britain. Then he discovered that control of the organization had been usurped secretly by a hard-working inner clique, which held other views. Philbrick's alternatives were to go along with the hidden control, or resign and abandon the organization he had built. Acting on impulse, he took his problem to the FBI. Philbrick was told obliquely that if he chose to go along with the clique he believed to be Communist, and if he learned anything of interest in the process, the Government would appreciate being informed. As time went on, Philbrick was schooled in the tactics of concealment and was reimbursed for expenses by the FBI.

During five years as a Party member and an earlier period during which he allowed himself to be wooed and won by the Communists, Philbrick turned in regular reports to the FBI. His party assignments ranged from propaganda (which fitted in

Oliver Pilat, a member of the staff of the New York Post, *is at work on a book on espionage in the United States.*

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easily with a new and more important job as a theatrical press agent in Boston) to political activity through various fronts, including the Progressive Citizens of America which participated in the 1948 Presidential campaign for Henry Wallace. Toward the end of his Communist service, Philbrick was associated with a "pro" cell of party intellectuals.

The 2,000 members of the various "pro" groups in the U.S. funnel information to one of the several Soviet spy nets in the U.S., Philbrick says. This has been generally suspected. Philbrick does not provide details of actual espionage by anybody, perhaps because he had not worked himself sufficiently into the confidence of the apparatus before he appeared as a Government witness during the 1949 trial of eleven U.S. Politburo members. The author's self-conferred title of "counter-spy" really amounted to "informer." There was no need to shrink from the more familiar, if less romantic tag, since informers exist only where crime is involved. Nobody informs on the Boy Scouts.

One of Philbrick's valuable bits of information concerns Marxist study groups in which he participated. The shrewd press agent realized immediately that these groups had no educational purpose, in the ordinary use of the word. They were vehicles for indoctrination, for drilling intellectuals in subservience. Various propositions were advanced at each meeting. At the slightest hint of dissent or diffidence on the part of any member, everything stopped, for as long as necessary, until the variation had been erased, and repented. From other sources we know that similar Marxist study groups put U.S. and Canadian scientists in a mood for atomic espionage during the war, and Edward Hunter, in his valuable recent book, "Brain-Washing in Red China," has revealed the same process at work on a national scale.

Philbrick advances some debatable conclusions as a result of his experiences. He deplores efforts to outlaw the Communist Party because this would make more difficult the FBI task of penetration. He urges that increasing Federal responsibility in fields such as housing be avoided to disprove the Communist theory of capitalist deterioration. Decisions in such matters might well be made on far broader, pragmatic grounds of national self-interest. For one thing, since the core of Stalinism is conspiratorial, as Philbrick shows so well, and since it will continue to be conspiratorial, no matter what else survives, why not lop off the visible tentacles which bring nourishment to the core?

J. Saunders Redding—"calmly defiant."

Facing a Dilemma

ON BEING NEGRO IN AMERICA. By J. Saunders Redding. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 156 pp. $3.

By Arna Bontemps

RECENTLY the personal essay has lost ground in our literature, but now and again an insouciant writer, scorning the trend, offers a reminder of the still virile possibilities of the form. J. Saunders Redding's new book, as the title itself indicates, is such a reminder. That the theme and form seem so well suited in this case is a tribute to the author. The man can write!

Once they become involved in the controversial issues, however, many readers are apt to forget the writer's art. Briefly, Mr. Redding is fed up. As a human being, a man of scholarly interests and academic habits, an esteemed professor of English at Hampton Institute in Virginia, and the father of two robust boys, he resents increasingly the fact that he has never been able to free himself of entanglements growing out of the racial attitudes of his country. Whether reading philosophy in his study, remembering a drunken white woman he once saw tumble unconscious into the snow in Louisville, shopping for groceries in a supermarket with his small son, or attending a literary cocktail party in his own honor in New York, he has felt tendrils from the same plant fastening themselves to him. But he has come to the end of patience. His essay is a calmly defiant declaration of principles and intentions.

Mr. Redding is determined that the dreadful vine shall not continue to hold him captive under its poisonous leaves. To that end he has looked closely at the problem. His own experiences, his boyhood in Wilmington, his college life at Brown, his teaching in Negro colleges of the South, and his first encouraging bows in literary circles, he assumes, will do as a point of reference. Wherever he has been and whatever he has done, he has been obliged to eat and think and sleep and talk Negro. And while his case may not have been exceptional, he for one is sick and tired of it.

He sees no sense in having to write as a black man, and he can't understand why as a scholar he more than anyone else must become an authority on Negro problems. It bothers him to find Negro singers forced to include spirituals in their programs whether or not they do them especially well. This attitude has been with him for years, and along the way he has given thought to cures advocated by Booker T. Washington, Marcus Garvey, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Communists, but he has modified or rejected most of them in reaching the conclusions presented in "On Being Negro in America."

Apart from integration Mr. Redding can see no way out of the American dilemma. Nor is he willing to wait for leisurely change. He needs to breathe free air now. Moreover, he intends to. He has made a decision. After this essay he will make no further public statement on "the problem."

The decision is worth attention. Mr. Redding has written five books, all of them about being Negro in America. They have been well received. A Mayflower Award and a Guggenheim Fellowship have followed their publication. He has written about Negroes in America with the authority of firsthand knowledge. Now he wants a bigger theme. He feels that "a commitment to something outside oneself is necessary to human and humanistic development." So he is dropping the subject that has interested and restricted him for the twenty years since he began writing.

If he can make his declaration of independence stick, he will have wrought well. It may be that the freedom Mr. Redding asserts for himself can be maintained by Negro intellectuals generally at this moment. What comes next is not so clear, but the

(*Continued on page* 40)

Arna Bontemps, a member of the faculty of Fisk University, is the author of more than a dozen books and plays.

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It All Begins with the Word

THE book-publishing industry has been undergoing some organized soul-searching. Conference has followed conference; special committees have reported on the problems of the profession. What the fact-finders are after, of course, is a detailed reexamination of the various factors that determine the health of the book business.

Competent and valuable though the studies may be, the arterial supply line has so far been largely overlooked by the publishers. We are not referring here to the paper manufacturers or the printers, whose policies, performances, and prospects have been carefully examined by the book industry. Nor do we have in mind the book distributors or booksellers. The branch of the profession to which we refer is the word-maker himself, the writer, whose product is processed by the publisher for sale in the market-place.

Except for the words supplied by the writer, the book is a standardized product. It comes in various sizes with slight variations in paper and binding quality; but the physical book as a product enjoys as much uniformity as almost any other product manufactured. The ink required to register the print is almost negligible, yet the particular formations and combinations of those ink markings are more important than any of the other ingredients that go into the making of a book. These ink markings d e t e r m i n e whether the publisher has a mass-market product on his hands with a low unit cost, or a product of strictly limited appeal with a high unit cost. There is one set of economics for the former, another for the latter. The distance between the two is as great as though each belonged to a separate industry.

In a less commercial sense, these ink markings or words determine whether a publisher is making a lasting contribution to the thought and culture of his time, or whether he is producing a highly perishable commodity.

It might be supposed that the supplier of the words would be placed on at least even footing with the supplier of paper or the supplier of print in any survey of book publishing. Yet the surveys are almost exclusively devoted to mechanical or sales problems. Are we to suppose that there are no serious problems in the relationship of the writer to the publisher, bookseller, and reader? Is there an abundant and self-replenishing supply of good manuscripts? Are there any author's grievances, legitimate or otherwise, that are affecting the desire and ability of writers to write? How many talented writers regard the writing of books as secondary to other forms of writing—and why? Do some writers feel that they are held cheaply by too many publishers, or are taken for granted? Indeed, that they are regarded as bargain basement items? How important is the factor of respect for the writer and his problems in any evaluation of the book business?

The paper-manufacturing industry plants vast new tracts each year, even though the timber may not be realized for many years to come. In the more important field of word supply, what long-range planning is now being done? Are we assured of an uninterrupted source of supply of the good words that can make good books? Can an industry dependent on the word-maker be in a sound condition if sufficient writing incentive is lacking? How easy or difficult is it for the new word-maker to obtain *serious* writing consideration by a publisher? Is it true that unless he is lucky enough to have a top-notch agent, or someone who knows a publisher, there is a very small chance that he can obtain a *competent* reading? Is the unsolicited manuscript department often the most neglected and therefore the least respected end of a publishing house?

Even allowing for the fact that the average basketful of unsolicited manuscripts is a long way from being a literary cornucopia, is it possible that too many publishers are practising an almost automatic rejection policy, or have allowed manuscripts to be examined by incompetent and inexpensive personnel? Again, taking full note of the difficulties in the way of adequate monitoring of unsolicited books, what is the likely effect of such policies on new talent? How should an aspiring word-maker respond to the information that a major publishing house had accepted only two manuscripts from his unsolicited basket in a quarter-century of publishing? As a not unrelated question, it may not be impertinent to ask how many worthwhile books suffered rejection at the same publisher's hands? Or how it was that the two manuscripts that turned out to be the leading fiction and non-fiction books of

Prayer

By Jan Struther

HONOR the true believer
The man whose feet have trod
Life's road of fret and fever
Sustained by trust in God.
Whatever foes assailed him
He faced them fair and square:
His strong sword never failed him—
Faith in the power of prayer.

Crown him with wreaths of laurel
Of myrtle and of bay:
With that I have no quarrel —
Yet spare one slender spray
For him who, unbelieving,
Unpious, undevout,
Long wandering and weaving
Among the pits of doubt,
Faced, prayerless and unweeping,
The flying spears of grief,
Unarmed, yet proudly keeping
Faith with his unbelief.

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the season were rejected or lost by the same publisher?

And what of the writer's difficulties, problems, and hazards after a manuscript is accepted? What of the competition inside a publishing house for an important place on a list? Don't most books have to run something of a gauntlet before publication? Is it true that a few books get the preponderance of the publisher's money and attention, while most of the others have to fend for themselves as best they can? Is it true that there is very little in-between promotion for a book, that it either gets a lot of advertising and publisher help, or it gets almost nothing? Or that if a book doesn't happen to catch on the first week or so after publication a publisher may lose all promotion interest? Sometimes, of course, a book is so good that eventually the public overcomes even the most congealed restraint, but isn't it also unhappily true that any number of good books have either died on the vine or languished for want of publisher support?

Next, how much of a gamble should the author reasonably be expected to take in the publication of his book? Is it possible that he might be persuaded to decrease his royalty percentage in exchange for some fixed payment? Is there any advantage in having a variable ratio between royalty arrangement and fixed income, the former decreasing as the latter is increased?

CONCERNING the royalty statement itself, are publishers convinced that the present system is entirely equitable? The author receives a statement of copies sold during a certain period and an amount based on his royalty percentage. Does the statement indicate how many copies were printed, exactly where the copies were sold, how many copies are on hand, or precise statistical breakdowns concerning additional printings? If it is pointed out that this information is available on request, is it not a fair answer to say that the author should not be put in the position of questioning his publishers on information that should be his as a matter of routine?

When authors complain that they have no way of verifying a royalty statement without embarrassing themselves or the publisher, is such a complaint totally unreasonable? The author can, if he wishes, send his accountant to a publisher's office to double-check against the possibility of error, but does this make for harmonious author-publisher relations?

Newspapers and magazines, faced with a somewhat similar problem with respect to circulation statements for advertisers, neatly solved the problem by creating an organization known as the Audit Bureau of Circulations, an impartial accounting agency maintained at relatively low cost that examines and reports on each publisher's circulation accounting records. The question of honesty or dishonesty does not enter here; it is a business arrangement in which the parties to a contract are entitled to full and verifiable information—as a matter of right, not privilege.

No issue of honesty or lack of it is raised in asking whether book publishers and authors might not at least consider the practicability of an industry-wide auditing system. The fact that a person happens to be a book publisher, for example, does not give him special exemption on income-tax forms. The Government does not allow him the privilege of reporting only final figures as to net income and tax. Nor does the Government reflect on his integrity by requiring full supporting data. Why should a publisher be shocked or wounded at the suggestion that authors, too, are entitled to full supporting data?

It may very well be that the many questions asked in this editorial can all be answered to the publisher's advantage and the author's satisfaction, and that present policies are perfectly adequate to handle present problems. Our purpose in asking them is to indicate that at least the questions exist and deserve serious study. Whatever the problems of the book industry, we need to remind ourselves that the book begins with the written word.

—N. C.

Trading the Mind for the Eye

PRESIDENT A. Whitney Griswold, of Yale University, addressed himself to a disturbing paradox at the recent gathering of the nation's publishers, editors, writers, and critics who had assembled in New York for the National Book Awards. Describing how his heavy duties at Yale had so circumscribed his time for reading as to make him almost a "technological illiterate," President Griswold went on to ask, "What happens when we are all too busy to read, when our ways of life and work combined with the substitutes for reading now in mass production and use finally conquer our taste for reading as well as our belief in its utility?

"Ours is an age of action, hair-trigger action, and we cannot resign from it. But what is to become of us when action no longer finds inspiration or discipline in thought because thought has not been able to find inspiration or discipline in books . . .

"What are we doing under our forest of television masts, with our indispensable ghost writers, our analysts, opinion-samplers, and committees of brain-pickers? We are succumbing one by one to technological illiteracy. We have traded in the mind's eye for the eye's mind."

No circle could be more vicious or dangerous. President Griswold is to be applauded for thus dramatizing the need to break out of the ring now closing around the life of the mind.

—W. D. P.

Gilbert E. Goodkind

TRAGEDY in its most appalling form stunned the book world on January 30 when thirty-seven year-old Gilbert E. Goodkind, executive secretary since 1946 of the American Booksellers' Association, met his death in a highway accident near Rocky Mount, North Carolina, en route to a Florida vacation. The extent of the misfortune can be better comprehended when it is reported that the toll of victims included not only this able, respected, and popular member of the book fraternity but also his wife and both his parents. His five-year-old son was the sole survivor.

Few persons in this country had greater knowledge of the distribution of books especially as it affected the retailers—"the front line of book sales"—or had greater understanding in facing its problems, or greater devotion to the smooth functioning of the national organization designed to serve not only the bookseller but all concerned with books from the author to the reader. His education and background made him eminently qualified for his work. The complexities of book distribution held no terrors for him, only a challenge to a well-trained, deep-thinking, and honest mind. The memory of his service to books will be as enduring as the sound principles and practices which became not only his business code but his code of life.

—J. R. C.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Religion and the Schools"

SIR: N. C. in his recent editorial on "Religion and the Schools" [*SR* Dec. 29] draws a very vivid picture of the dangers to our public education inherent in a law that allows the exemption of some children from the study of health and hygiene required of other children. As Mr. Cousins so clearly points out, the action of the Board of Regents in eliminating questions on the germ theory of disease from the Regents examination in biology does have the effect of imposing religious beliefs of a particular group upon the pupils of all religious faiths. It does subordinate the common body of knowledge developed in our public schools for all American citizens to the religious tenets of a small group of people.

However, in blaming the Board of Regents for its action in modifying the Regents examination in biology, it seems to the writer that there is a misunderstanding of the actual facts in the situation, probably because they are not all evident to one who is not actually in the schools.

This amendment to the Education Law, which was introduced into the 1950 session of the State Legislature at the express urging of the Christian Science Church, applies to all people of all religions. While the Christian Scientists are the only ones to be granted excuse from instruction thus far, the State Education Department has long had requests for such exemptions from other religious groups. If the law remains, there is no doubt that these requests will have to be granted, and that new exemptions will have to be made for these groups as well as for the Christian Scientists. When that happens, our curriculum, designed to provide a common body of knowledge to all our children, will be riddled with gaps involving material of basic importance to our community life.

If the Board of Regents grants exemptions from the study of certain subject matter to any group of pupils, then obviously these pupils cannot be expected to know this material. Any examination which includes this subject matter must necessarily be unfair to them. Therefore, the Board of Regents must either eliminate this material from the examinations or be guilty of giving discriminatory examinations. Even if the parents of such pupils are willing to allow this discrimination against their children, as the Christian Scientists are at the moment, it is probably illegal for the Board of Regents to countenance such unfair examinations. They must drop the questionable material from the examinations, and in so doing, penalize the vast majority of pupils to avoid hurting a small minority group.

Thus it seems clear that the real threat to our public education is not the action of the Board of Regents, but the existence of the law which encourages and makes necessary such implementation. Only the complete repeal of the amendment can remedy the situation.

There are other aspects of the situation which are probably evident only to teachers who have the problem of handling such a situation in day-to-day teaching. How, for example, does the school segregate its pupils along religious lines without allowing all the undesirable results of segregation to occur? Isn't segregation along religious lines, even when voluntary, just as undesirable as segregation along racial lines? Is this a time to establish such segregation by law? When the excluded material is as basic to the entire syllabus as is the germ theory of disease to biology, when it occurs frequently throughout the syllabus, how does a youngster who must be excused from class frequently ever get any kind of sequential instruction?

This law, when fully operative, giving exemptions to many special groups, can bring only a loss of freedom to the majority of students, an undesirable segregation to the minority students, and a chaotic condition to the schools and the curriculum. The repeal of the law is essential to maintain the integrity of our public education.

MARION RICHTER.

New York, N. Y.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"But, Diogenes, this is ridiculous—you could qualify for the new public housing project."

Montaigne's Lessons

SIR: Being an assiduous reader of Montaigne, I want to express my appreciation of Antonio Iglesias's "Open Letter to Montaigne" [*SR* Dec. 22]. May I add an important point not mentioned in this article? "Writing as the mood took him, through years of apparent insuperable strife, living in one of the most violently troubled regions of a France perpetually convulsed, yet contriving to pass unscathed through the whole evil time, he could not but keep his thoughts adjusted to that tempest outside, however peacefully he passed his days with his books and his pen." Thus wrote J. M. Robertson in his introduction to the Essays. That he was one of the wisest men that ever lived, I believe; that he did not spend his time *reporting* the incidents of that "tempest outside" but wrote, as all great writers have, of the eternal truths of human existence, frankly and honestly, is the lesson present-day writers might learn.

ANNE MILLER DOWNES.

Scarsdale, N. Y.

Diminishing Freedom?

SIR: There is something almost ghoulish about *The Saturday Review*'s penchant for beating dead horses. One hardly sees an issue of your magazine in which there is not at least one article proving that Stalin has no taste, that Lysenko lied, and that the writer in the USSR is not free. But we do not need to be told these things, really: these facts have long since ceased to be news. The danger, at least as it appears in this country, is more that something similar is happening in the United States, not by Government edict, but by the pressure of ex-Communists. . . . Nobody questions that the artist in the U.S. has more freedom than his cousin in the USSR. But neither can anybody deny that he has less freedom than he had fifteen years ago and that, in fifteen years, he will have less freedom than he has now. This is no doubt politically necessary; but it is the duty of the writer to resist political necessities. He respects no necessities but those of his art. And a critical magazine is concerned with appraising his success in this. . . .

NORMAN NEWTON.

Winnipeg, Canada.

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SR Reader's Page

IN A time of gathering crisis around the world General Dwight D. Eisenhower is the overwhelming choice of *Saturday Review* readers for the next President of the United States. If the American people are to have another "rendezvous with destiny," General Eisenhower at this moment is clearly the man they want in the White House.

In a cross-country poll of *SR* readers the Supreme Commander of SHAPE received more than twice as many votes as the runner-up, Senator Robert A. Taft, Mr. Republican himself. But both men were well out in front of the rest of the field. Even more respondents predicted General Eisenhower would be elected President in November than had endorsed him. Although President Truman was not even in the first ten of preferred candidates, he was in second place for the forecast of November's ultimate victor. Senator Taft dropped to third place, several percentage points behind Truman.

Practical U. S. politics is concerned with clues to the underlying currents of public opinion. The significant question on Presidential preferences was the following: "Regardless of availability, what living American would you most like to see elected President of the United States in 1952?" The top ten were:

Dwight D. Eisenhower	54.6%
Robert Taft	22.9
Estes Kefauver	18.7
John Foster Dulles	16.9
Earl Warren	15.9
Harold Stassen	13.1
Eleanor Roosevelt	11.8
Henry Cabot Lodge	9.6
Paul Douglas	6.6
Dean Acheson	6.4

(The percentage figures total more than 100 because each respondent could name more than one candidate.)

President Truman received 6.2 per cent of the respondent's votes, immediately followed by Governor Adlai Stevenson, of Illinois, with 5.4 per cent. Governor Stevenson has been widely discussed as Mr. Truman's own first choice for a successor if he himself decides not to run again this fall.

The nature of General Eisenhower's strength in comparison with all other candidates stood out impressively when the 1948 voting record of those answering the poll was analyzed. It was his support among those who voted Democratic as well as Republican that gave him such a decisive lead over Senator Taft. A breakdown by parties of the total votes the two major contestants received showed this significant distribution:

	Voted Democratic Per cent	Voted Republican Per cent	Voted Other Per cent	Not Reported Per cent
Eisenhower	24	39	2.5	5
Taft	3	24	0	2.5

General Eisenhower was not only stronger among Republicans than Senator Taft, but in sharp contrast also commanded a sizable base of support among those die-hard Democrats who finally came through for President Truman in 1948.

There is apparently more to General Eisenhower's appeal for a cross-section of thoughtful voters than the mere "glamour" of a great military hero. *SR* readers listed the following qualities as the most important attributes they would like to see in the man elected President this fall:

Integrity
Broad knowledge of foreign affairs
Ability to place duty above party
Skill in and knowledge of politics
Courage and vision
Religious faith
Humanitarianism
Belief in economy in government
Tranquility of mind and spirit

When asked to predict who would actually be elected in November, *SR* readers made one major departure from the consistent pattern that characterized their answers to all other questions about their Presidential preferences.

Eisenhower again was the dominating figure with 59.9 per cent predicting that he would actually be elected, but President Truman moved into second place on this significant question with 19.4 per cent forecasting his re-election. Only 16.2 per cent were prepared to forecast final success for Senator Taft.

IT should be noted that in this poll *SR* readers were taking their stand before the Democratic and Republican conventions had nominated candidates, before party platforms were available for study, and before debate on the issues confronting the country could be joined. Still a pattern of thoughtful opinion emerged that the professional politicians and party leaders might well study as they engage in their pre-convention maneuvers.

Because the chief executive of the United States is a world figure whose policies and personality are of significant concern to all nations, *Saturday Review* editors decided to pose the following theoretical question to *SR* readers in order to learn whom among the earth's leaders—whether political, intellectual, or spiritual—they would choose to lead this country during the critical years just ahead: "Regardless of either availability or nationality, what living person would you most like to see elected President of the United States in 1952?" The 10 leaders were:

Dwight Eisenhower	52.5%
Robert Taft	21.9
Estes Kefauver	16.8
John Foster Dulles	15.4
Albert Schweitzer	15.0
Winston Churchill	14.6
Eleanor Roosevelt	13.1
Earl Warren	12.3
Harold Stassen	11.7
Paul Hoffman	9.8

President Truman was again named by 6.2 per cent of those replying to this question.

It was interesting that Dr. Albert Schweitzer, philosopher and musician as well as doctor, who has devoted his life to heading a medical mission in the heart of Africa, was the non-American figure commanding widest support. He was followed by Prime Minister Winston Churchill of England and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India in that order.

—WILLIAM D. PATTERSON.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *It is the policy of* The Saturday Review *to seek reader opinion from time to time on questions of national importance. The following article is based on the latest* SR *reader poll which probed Presidential preferences at this opening stage of the* 1952 *campaign.*

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Belles-Lettres. *Too many of the younger generation of fiction writers, it is frequently complained, have little to draw upon for the stuff of their tales save the experiences of their own childhoods. But as Graham Greene reminds us in the title essay of his new volume of literary papers, "The Lost Childhood" (reviewed below), the work of virtually all the great writers of the past was materially influenced by their early years. Others of Mr. Greene's highly opinionated but always engrossing pieces, as well as Eileen Bigland's fascinating biography of the Victorian novelist "Ouida" (page 29), will help complement the discussion of the perplexities of authorship that leads off this issue. . . . ¶ The classic collection of miraculous tales, bawdy stories, and bloody adventures known as Apuleius's "The Golden Ass" has been given a fine new rendering into English by Robert Graves (see page 29).*

Reflections on Men & Letters

THE LOST CHILDHOOD AND OTHER ESSAYS. By Graham Greene. New York: Viking Press. 191 pp. $3.50.

By Harvey Curtis Webster

IT IS only when one is young, Graham Greene says, that books influence us deeply; "in later life . . . we are more likely to find in books merely a confirmation of what is in our minds already: as in a love affair it is our own features that we see reflected flatteringly back."

In his own lost childhood, Mr. Greene read Marjorie Bowen's "The Viper of Milan" and discovered the pattern Catholicism seemed to confirm and that all his books illustrate: "perfect evil walking the world where perfect good can never walk again, and only the pendulum ensures that after all in the end justice is done." From this insight Mr. Greene's first collection of essays derives a partiality, a perceptiveness, and a candor highly unusual in contemporary criticism.

Apart from the title essay and the illuminating autobiography of "The Revolver in the Corner Cupboard" the best of these pieces are those about writers whom life wounded early. As Mr. Greene sees him, Henry James's "evasion" of service in the Civil War that ruined two of his brothers caused him to see "evil as an equal force with good," compelled the novels of his major phase, enabled him to pity the most blemished of his characters and become "as solitary in the history of the novel as Shakespeare in the history of poetry." Dickens's unhappy childhood gave him the ability to portray evil skilfully and good unconvincingly, for it made him suspect the world was made by Satan rather than God. Mr. De la Mare's early preoccupation with death governs the symbols and permits the excellence of his fiction and poetry. Samuel Butler's "crippling childhood" maimed everything he did. Kipling and Saki never escaped the "burden of their childhoods." Nor did many of the other writers Mr. Greene illuminates by creating them after his own image. "Every creative writer worth our consideration is a victim: a man given over to an obsession."

Whether one agrees or not, Mr. Greene's brilliant presentation compels thought. His two pages on Saki and Kipling suggest as much as longer essays, even books, have said. Kipling's characters "rattle down a conveyor belt like matchboxes." Saki "protected himself with epigrams as closely set as currants in an old-fashioned Dundee cake." Leon Bloy's characters are presented "only deformity-deep." The vicious Baron Corvo "narrowly evaded sanctity."

There are times, it is true, when Mr. Greene's ingenious partiality compels strong disagreement. The characters of Virginia Woolf and E. M. Forster do not wander "like cardboard symbols through a world . . . paper-thin." There is too much about why James almost was a Catholic; there is a one-sided view of the eighteenth century "when politics for the first time ceased to represent any deep issues and religion excited only the shallowest feeling."

Still Mr. Greene always supplies the basis for his own discounting. He never pretends to objectivity. Except in a few unexpected and delightful humorous essays (such as the one about the psychic dog of Weimar), he is serious about writers and books because they reveal the nature of man and the universe to him and may to his readers. He can be excessively intolerant or intolerably narrow, but he does not exalt his own cleverness nor does he forget the writer he is criticizing.

—*Harper's Bazaar.*

Graham Greene—"illuminates by creating them after his own image."

Harvey Curtis Webster is the author of "On a Darkling Plain: The Art and Thought of Thomas Hardy."

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A Classic Revised

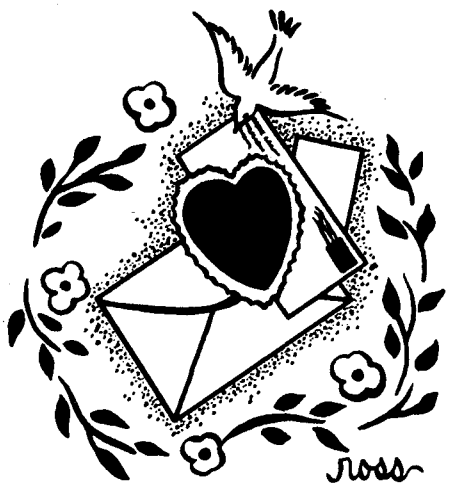
THE GOLDEN ASS. A New Translation by Robert Graves from Apuleius. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. 293 *pp.* $3.50.

By Ben Ray Redman

THE tale of how a young Numidian gentleman was transformed by Thessalian magic into an ass—and how after many extraordinary adventures, he was made a man again, thanks to the gracious charity of divine Isis—has delighted modern readers ever since it was conveyed from its original Latin into sixteenth-century Spanish, Italian, French, and English. William Adlington did the job for the last language, in 1566, with many assists and misdirections from his French predecessor, Guillaume Michel; and his version has held the field against more scholarly successors. Now Robert Graves gives us a new translation that is most welcome. It lacks Adlington's Elizabethan picturesqueness, confusions, and obscurities, but it is also innocent of his errors, and it offers clear sailing to the present-day reader.

Mr. Graves has been wise, probably, to make "no attempt to bring out the oddness of the Latin by writing in a style, say, somewhere between Lyly's 'Euphues' and Amanda Ros's 'Irene Iddesleigh' "; but it is a question whether he is right when he argues that, "paradoxically, the effect of oddness is best achieved in convulsed times like the present by writing in as easy and sedate an English as possible." He has achieved no effect of oddness, but a very pleasing clarity. And he raises another question when he says that Apuleius was parodying the verbal extravagances of the Milesian storytellers; for the generally held opinion is that Apuleius's style was a fine, characteristic flower of the African School, and that, in combination with the archaizing tendencies of this school, as J. Wright Duff has remarked, not a little of the Latin of Apuleius and Tertullian is due to the way in which people talked their Latin in Africa." However, this is a subject for experts.

"The Transformations of Lucius Apuleius of Madaura," much better known as "The Golden Ass," is a farrago of miraculous tales, bawdy stories, horrifying incidents, bloody adventures, and one beautiful immortal fable—"Cupid and Psyche." It has been saluted as "a beginning of modern literature," and, more specifically, as the forerunner of the picaresque novel. Its author offered it to his readers as "a string of anecdotes in



the popular Milesian style," and for centuries it was generally enjoyed as nothing more. Indeed, it still is. Mr. Graves is undoubtedly right when he says that it is unlikely that many readers ever spent much time on the story's edifying close; that, "The book's popularity, ever since it was written, has rested almost wholly on its 'pleasant and delectable jest,' especially the bawdy ones." Yet it is hard to believe that there were not, even from the first, at least a few discerning persons who saw the book for what it really was—a sincere story of religious conversion, in which the hero is, as the High Priest tells the throng, spiritually reborn, in accordance with beliefs that were commonly held by pagan religions long before Christianity claimed the process of spiritual rebirth for its very own.

Apuleius may have attracted his audience with the stock phrase, *Assem para et accipe auream fabulum, fabulas immo* ("Pay a penny, and I'll tell you a golden tale—yes indeed, even several"). He may have held his audience with the heroic love-bouts of Lucius and Fotis, with the lubricities of the effeminate priests of Cybele, with magic, murder, sadism, and bestiality. But the end towards which he led that audience was his celestial vision on the beach at Cenchreae, his awakening to a world that "seemed filled with delight," his release from a living death, his priestly initiation into the mysteries of Isis and Osiris, and his ceaseless adoration of those inseparably linked deities. Never elsewhere is he so eloquent as he is in his closing pages. For, as Mr. Graves says in his introduction: "His greatest desire was not applause: it was to show his gratitude to the Goddess whom he adored, by living a life worthy of her favor . . ."

All of which, of course, does not mean that "The Golden Ass" will not continue to be read, with keen appetite, for the usual reasons.

Better Than Fiction

OUIDA: The Passionate Victorian. By Eileen Bigland. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 272 *pp.* $3.75.

By Robert Halsband

IF nobody reads Ouida's novels today, almost everybody read them as they appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century. "What I admire in Ouida," a contemporary reader remarked, "is that Vice is Vice and Virtue is Virtue." With her morality so comfortably designed, no wonder her books delighted! She offered other, more titillating satisfactions. In the early tales her tinseled picture of high life as lived by dashing hussars and mysteriously titled ladies thrilled the drab Victorian maiden; then her later animal stories—"The Dog of Flanders," the best known—encouraged her readers to a good virtuous cry; and her last group of novels, about the hardships of the Italian peasantry, stirred the socially conscious to indignation—at least in the cozy remoteness of England. This progression gives, roughly, the subjects of Ouida's novels, and it also charts the decline of her popularity. Why it came to an end along with the century is an idle question; what is certain is that although she may have influenced more substantial writers—James and Firbank, for example—her books are as outmoded today as antimacassars.

Yet by some ironic law of compensation her life seems to us far more artful than her fictional art. There is, first of all, its epic design. A beginning: as the plain-faced Maria Louise Ramé, in an English provincial town, who scribbled her frustrations into best-selling novels that carried her into opulent flower-filled bowers in London. A middle: as the resplendent Ouida, dressed by Worth, surrounded by fawning lapdogs and Guardsmen, and then as the Lady of the Villa Farinola, caressed and feared by Florentine society. An end: as the recluse of San Alessio, starving and forgotten. The frenetic course of her life has all the suspense she tried to infuse into her fiction. What will she do next? we wonder; and then we see that although her actions are madly unpredictable, they are entirely credible and esthetically satisfying to us—for her peculiarities were so large and expansive that the whole unhappy pat-

(*Continued on page* 56)

Robert Halsband is assistant professor of English at Hunter College.

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Seeing Things

DAT OLE DAVIL AND A HARD GOD

IN a season most notable for its revivals, during which Ibsen has had a failure with "The Wild Duck," Shakespeare a hit with "Antony and Cleopatra," and Shaw his triumphs with "Saint Joan," "Caesar and Cleopatra," and "Don Juan in Hell," it is interesting to have had a chance to see "Anna Christie"* and "Desire Under the Elms"# again and judge how two of Eugene O'Neill's best known works have stood the test of time.

Both "Anna Christie" and "Desire" have their abiding and unmistakable excellences. Each has a dignity of its own. Each is the work of a man who, though not an author in the literary sense, has a towering talent for the stage and the ability to communicate passions, raw and violent. Each is informed and ignited by a spirit larger and more questing than any other American playwright has brought to the theatre. Both are contributions to an ephemeral medium which have in them the stuffs that endure. And both should explain to a generation that has only heard about O'Neill or studied him in college courses why he is held in such singular respect by older theatregoers and why he enjoys even now a solitary eminence among contemporary dramatists.

Yet, in spite of the virtues they have in common, "Anna Christie" and "Desire" are very different plays. What makes them different in depth and scale is not that "Anna" (1921) was written realistically and that "Desire" (1924) employed dialogue of a semi-stylized kind. The cleavage is far more fundamental than that. It springs from the fact that within a short three years O'Neill had ceased to view life ironically and come to see it in the terms of high tragedy. More than being a step forward, this change in attitude and purpose must be described as a leap.

In both "Anna Christie" and "Desire" forces outside the characters shape and control their lives in the usual O'Neill manner. In "Anna" the external agent is, of course, "dat ole davil, sea" which is the *dea ex machina*. It is "dat old davil" which Chris, Anna's barge captain father, blames with a frequency that almost becomes laughable. The sea has broken Chris and has been indirectly responsible for Anna's turning prostitute. The sea brings such a tempestuous Irishman as Mat aboard Anna's father's barge. It starts the two men quarreling and makes Mat, a Catholic, fall in love with a Lutheran. The sea in a sullen mood, and playing her "vorst dirty tricks," leads Mat and Chris to sign up for duty on the same ship, and at the end has them and Anna at its mercy, in a last act which never satisfied O'Neill and which some people, strangely enough, used to mistake for a "happy ending."

Few, I think, would deny that "Anna Christie" continues to be a moving and effective script in spite of having been killed in its recent production. But this much even that revival did again make clear. A drama in which the characters are victims of "dirty tricks" played by such an impersonal devil as the sea is not a tragedy. Its misfortunes are the product of irony. Its characters have no chance to determine their own fates. They are beaten down or trapped without being allowed to fight back. Their struggle, however fascinating, is one-sided. The writing is limited throughout by the limited vision of life which lies behind it.

IF "Desire" has a scale "Anna" cannot claim, one reason is that before he came to write it O'Neill's sensing of the tragic had undergone an all-important change. It had outgrown irony and, having discarded it, climbed to those high peaks of agony where tragedy resides. Old Ephraim Cabot, his son Eben who cuckolds him, and

* *ANNA CHRISTIE, by Eugene O'Neill. Directed by Michael Gordon. Settings and costumes by Emeline Roche. Presented by Harald Bromley. With a cast including Celeste Holm, Art Smith, Grace Valentine, Kevin McCarthy, etc. Opened at the New York City Center, January 9, 1952. Moved to the Lyceum Theatre, January 23, 1952. Closed February 2, 1952.*

\# *DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS, by Eugene O'Neill. Directed by Harold Clurman. Setting by Mordecai Gorelik. Costumes by Ben Edwards. Presented by the American National Theatre and Academy, Play Series—1952, Robert Whitehead, Managing Director. With a cast including Karl Malden, Carol Stone, Douglas Watson, Lou Polan, George Mitchell, etc. At the ANTA Playhouse, New York City. Opened January 16, 1952.*

—Vic Shifreen.

The famous party scene from "Desire Under the Elms" (Carol Stone, far left, Karl Malden, standing right)—"feeling of majesty."

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Ephraim's young wife Abbie are all people as "hard an' lonesome" as the rock-strewn New England farm on which they live and the God they are proud to worship and whose right to punish them they do not question.

Nature no more ignores them than they ignore it. Instead of being its victims, they are a part of it. For the soft of the earth they have only contempt. "When ye kin make corn sprout out o' stones," cries Ephraim, "God's livin' in yew! . . . God's hard, not easy! God's in the stones! Build my church on a rock—out o' stones an' I'll be in them! That's what He meant t' Peter! Stones. I picked 'em up an' piled 'em into walls. Ye kin read the years o' my life in them walls, every day a hefted stone, climbin' over the hills up and down, fencing in fields that was mine, whar I'd made thin's grow out o' nothin'—like the will o' God, like the servant o' his hand. It wa'n't easy. It was hard an' He made me hard fur it."

The eternal necessity of tragedy is to create beauty out of ugliness. It deals with crimes which, however horrible or sordid, prove ennobling to the guilty if for no other reason than that they are purified by the intensity of their torments and the enormity of their suffering. Covetousness, thieving, an old man deceived, a young man having a child by his stepmother and that stepmother murdering this baby to prove her devotion to her lover—these are not pretty subjects. Yet they achieve grandeur as O'Neill deals with them and even soar to their final moments of beauty when both Eben and Abbie, aware of their guilt and strengthened by their passion, face without fear the punishment they know they deserve.

Stark Young in his review of the original production of "Desire Under the Elms" pierced characteristically straight to the core of O'Neill's tragedy when he said, "It is essentially a story of solitude: of the land, of men's dreams, of love, of life. The God behind the existence created on this New England farm is a harsh God, who is alone and is not understood. The minds of the people in his story are shaken and tinged with loneliness, with thwarted passion, with the trivial, the intense, the drab exaltation and denial of life. Underneath this solitude desire works, the redemption through love."

JUST as the references to "dat ole davil, sea" in "Anna Christie" are too numerous for comfort, so the repetitions of "Purty, hain't it?" in "Desire" prove annoying in their frequency. Even so, the years have not robbed the play of its strength and intensity

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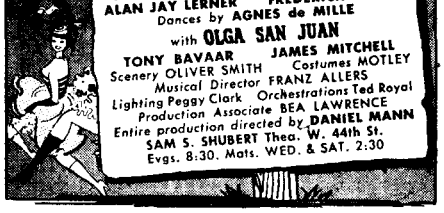

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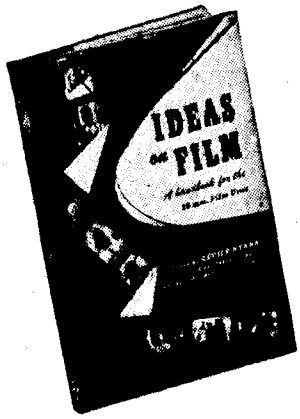

. . . Right Out of The Saturday Review of Literature

IDEAS ON FILM

Edited by Cecile Starr

with a Foreword by Irving Jacoby

This authoritative new handbook for 16 mm. enthusiasts, brings you a compilation of 29 articles by more than 20 experts who appraise and discuss the problems and prospects of the documentary and educational film in this country.

It provides you with valuable ideas and worthwhile opinions about non-theatrical films from the people who make and use them—among whom are such experts as Willard Van Dyke, Amos Vogel, Glen Burch, Julien Bryan, Patricia Blair, Rudolf Arnheim.

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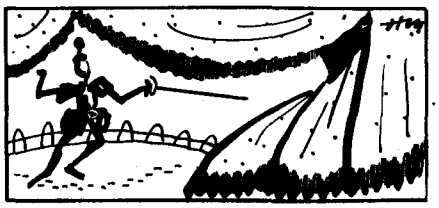
or of its capacity to summon in a bleak New England farmhouse a feeling of majesty such as the Greeks were able to evoke in a Theban palace.

The revivals of O'Neill's two plays were as different in their quality as the plays themselves. Unluckily, with the exception of Art Smith's Chris and Grace Valentine's Marty, "Anna Christie" had to struggle against an unhelpful production. Celeste Holm, a good actress, was a poor Anna, slick and empty and utterly lacking in the tremulous magic Pauline Lord brought to the part. Kevin McCarthy's Mat, after a promising beginning, became all sound and fury. And Michael Gordon's direction proved throughout a hindrance rather than an aid. Indeed, considering what was done to it, the highest tribute that can be paid to the text is that its merits refused to be extinguished.

"Desire Under the Elms" has been more fortunate. Harold Clurman has directed it with affection and understanding so complete that its virtues and values have all been realized. Karl Malden is an admirable old Ephraim, granite-hard and as relentless to himself as he is to those about him. Lou Polan and George Mitchell are excellent as the two older sons who head for Californi-a. Douglas Watson, a player of exceptional gifts, is a fine Eben. And Carol Stone, who in advance seemed the most unlikely of Abbies, gives a memorable performance and achieves a new stature as an actress.

People the world over, we are told again and again, like to think of us as a nation of technocrats. Although they grant us our ingenuity, they often wonder what we have produced beyond our gadgets. When in an unfriendly mood, they take our comics or our indifferent movies as a true expression of our civilization. Among our many serious writers and artists they forget Eugene O'Neill, even as our theatre has forgotten him for too long a time. They forget that no other country in modern times has produced a dramatist who, in good plays or in bad, has been so fearless an experimenter, who has looked with such unflinching eyes on all the black mysteries and sorrows of life, or who at his best has had so high and proud a command of the tragic vision.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.



Broadway Postscript

"JANE" is a comedy, of older people, by older people, and probably for older people. Not that there aren't moments of top-drawer S. N. Behrman wit and enough mortised and tenoned dialogue to delight all. There are, and all stylishly acted by Edna Best, Irene Browne, and Howard St. John with an occasional assist from Basil Rathbone, who for some reason is not quite comfortable in his part. But the young and the impatient are apt to find too many moments when nothing particularly important, clever, or charming seems to be going on.

The high comedy, though 1938 in setting, is Restoration in tone. It concerns itself with such seventeenth-century topics as fading sexual powers and the virtuous triumph of a dowdy widow (Somerset Maugham's Jane), who discomfits London society by marrying a young opportunist only to throw him over later for an old gallant. Fine as Cyril Ritchard's direction is when it comes to the fancy flourishes, it tends to become aimless and static over the long haul. No surprise to Behrman followers will be the dash of social consciousness which as usual never quite stirs itself into the concoction. (At the Coronet Theatre.)

Drama in Britain

THEATRE OF TWO DECADES. By Audrey Williamson. Macmillan. $5. This is an intelligently grouped critical summary of the more interesting British theatrical productions of the past twenty years. For Americans it will illuminate the development of Gielgud and Olivier as well as tell about the performances of other less familiar but equally adept actors. The most exciting of these, according to Miss Williamson, is Paul Scofield, whom she calls Gielgud's and Olivier's "legitimate successor."

Equal space is given to playwrights whose work has been shown in London. It includes the British reaction to American and other alien works. The book is a mine of plays for Broadway producers and college theatres to consider. One such sleeper is "Somebody Knows," which Miss Williamson labels "Van Druten's best play."

Ballet and opera rightfully are allotted chapters in this history, which maintains a fairly high degree of readability considering the five thousand proper names crammed into its 372 pages.

—H. H.

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Aged in the Theatre

HENRY HEWES

JOSEPH KRAMM is a large owlish man who lives in a fifth-floor walk-up on lower Eighth Avenue. His small apartment is crammed with the hodge-podge of furniture, books, and records that are the legacy of the alternate periods of slight prosperity and joblessness which, for most, characterize the theatrical profession. Until his first produced play, "The Shrike," opened three weeks ago, Joseph K had been trying with only minor success to establish himself in the theatre as an actor and director. Twenty-two years of the struggle have left his full face pallid and lined. They have also given him a matrix of suffering out of which he has created "The Shrike's" protagonist, Jim Downs.

"I made Downs a director in the theatre, because I know the kind of pressures under which such a man lives," explains the forty-four-year-old playwright. "But that's as much autobiography as I use. The wife is a made-up character which I needed as a device to make it difficult for Downs to get out of the city mental hospital. The other characters and things that happen come mostly from observations I made twelve years ago when I made the rounds of the city's mental wards with a psychiatrist friend of mine."

Mr. Kramm admits the play he wrote at that time was just a complaint about mismanagement and lack of facilities in mental hospitals. However, when he sat down two years ago to turn out "The Shrike" he had a different idea. "I wanted to show that Jim Downs in dealing with the normal toils of one of these places must make the same sort of adjustments the rest of us have to make in our daily lives. He must become a hypocrite, and he must accept the routine even when it is meaningless."

"The Shrike" begins with Downs, an attempted suicide, being brought into the hospital. "I had a lot of trouble motivating that suicide," says Mr. Kramm with the half perplexed, half resigned look of a man who has seen his work remodeled in rehearsal. "Originally it was O.K. Jim is a failure. He's separated from a wife to whom he's attached both through physical love and his own conscience, and because of this attachment he's unable to build a satisfactory relationship with another woman. What is most important, I had a 'trigger.' Just before his suicide attempt he receives a letter telling him that he has an appointment to see a producer about a big job. Now as a man who has been turned down for a lot of jobs by lots of producers I felt the fear of facing that appointment would be enough to set him off. However, other people felt the appointment was a hopeful sign, so I changed it to having the letter arrive after the suicide attempt."

It is apparent that Mr. Kramm is not as interested in how Jim Downs gets *in* this mess as he is in how he gets *out*. Indeed, in "The Shrike" he has made the way to freedom so difficult that he has been accused of exaggeration for melodramatic effect.

Mr. Kramm shakes his head with the same nonplussed look that Jim Downs uses in the play when the doctors refuse to believe his simple reiteration of the unvarnished truth. "One of the things I'm proudest of in this play is that I have not distorted or deliberately disparaged anything about mental hospitals or psychiatrists. Why just the other night I overheard two psychiatrists talking in the lobby. One said, 'Well, this kind of thing may have been true when I was down there, but not anymore.' The other one replied, 'I don't know. Have things really improved that much?' "

—*Alfredo Valente.*

Joseph Kramm—"parts fully rounded."

THE playwright, who sometimes resembles a wonderfully expressive clown because of the way his mouth turns down at the corners, reflected sadly, "I think perhaps people don't want to believe these unpleasant conditions exist because if they did they would feel a responsibility to do something about them. Also, lot's of theatregoers will do anything to resist identifying themselves with the victim. If they believe his suffering is just contrived for purposes of the play it somehow becomes less painful."

Another thing that the aged-in-the-theatre Mr. Kramm can be proud of is his ability to write brief parts in which the characters are fully rounded. "As a director and actor I discovered that most playwrights have a tendency to overwrite and don't understand how much an actor can do with the right couple of lines."

A proof of the actability of the roles he has written is the fact that José Ferrer's portrayal of Jim Downs is being hailed as the best of that fine actor's career. "It's been a wonderful thing to watch Joe grow in this part," says the playwright who took turns directing the play with the omnivorous Mr. Ferrer. "He told me before he started that he was going to try and make this performance come out of a probing within himself. To do it he's had to fight a natural facility which he's used in most of his other roles. But he's succeeded, and what's more

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 452

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 452 will be found in the next issue.

CMUL M BSWP JSVP

JDIBY NP M YPMY

DUP PKOPEH QDV

ZSG ODUUPOHSDUG.

—JSBGDU CSXUPV.

Answer to No. 451

Never give a man up until he has failed at something he likes.

—LEWIS E. LAWES.

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he keeps on improving with each performance."

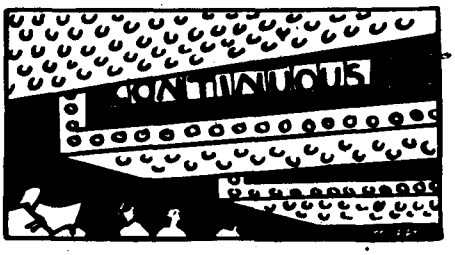
Mr. Kramm is equally happy about the way the smaller roles have turned out. "We were lucky," says Mr. Kramm with a nostalgic shiver that went far back, "to be able to get a bunch of fine actors, most of whom had worked with either Joe or me before. For instance, Kendall Clark, who plays the green-behind-the-ears psychiatrist, acted with me in the Eva Le Gallienne Civic Repertory production of "L'Aiglon" seventeen years ago. Incidentally, lay people think the questions that the psychiatrist asks in the final interview are unbelievably horrible. But they are absolutely authentic. Originally I had Downs answering the questions easily, but the preview audiences laughed at this. So I got hold of a psychiatrist I knew and asked him about it. He told me that the aim of that final interview is to make the patient founder if you can, and that's the way I rewrote it."

ANOTHER point questioned by some is the ending, which is said to be not definite enough. Mr. Kramm apparently has no question about it in his own mind. "I don't think it matters what happens to Jim Downs six months after he gets out," he says. "The important thing is that final moment when he breaks into tears. It is the moment of recognition, and the tears are something like that terrible shout in 'Oedipus.' In Philadelphia we followed this with another scene. It showed Jim leaving the hospital after his wife had brought his clothes and helped him to tie his tie. People didn't like it, so we cut it out. I think it proves that they don't really want a more definite ending."

With these thorny points settled, Mr. Kramm,a suddenly successful man of the theatre, stretched his arms and contemplated his own future. "From now on my wife and I are going to start taking cabs and eating at some of the good restaurants we haven't been able to afford before. We may even have this place repainted. But I'm not going to Hollywood unless its for a one-picture deal. Right now I'm starting to work on one play that has been optioned and on another that hasn't but which Eva Le Gallienne almost did back in 1933 with Charles Laughton. I've fixed it up considerably and I believe in it. You know, it isn't the first play that makes a playwright. It's the second. If my second one isn't good, they'll say "The Shrike" was just good luck and good acting. It's like I tell my students at the Theatre Wing. This business is nothing but heartbreak no matter how successful you get."

SR Goes to the Movies

TWO ADVENTURES IN ART



PROBABLY the most important of recent motion picture developments is the art film, movies with art as their subject. These are not simple teaching films, not illustrated lectures on art. In them—at least, in the best of them—film art gives extraordinary life and vitality to the older arts, creating on the screen a new and valid art experience out of the elements with which it works. The late Robert Flaherty's version of "The Titan" a few years back was one of the first and also one of the most successful to reach American audiences, an Academy Award winner. Since "The Titan" we have been seeing a steady increase in both the number and the quality of art shorts. Such films as "Grandma Moses," "Van Gogh," "1848," and "Balzac" have used the medium with considerable distinction, although each in a different way and for a different purpose. Their reception, both in theatres and in 16-mm, has been enthusiastic.

As evidence of the growing appeal of this form, two new art features have just put in their appearance. "Pictura, Adventure in Art" has already opened on the West Coast (to qualify for an Academy Award) and is now moving East; while "St. Matthew Passion," the final film from Robert Flaherty, recently had its American premiere in New York and is soon to be released nationally. Of the two, "Pictura" will inevitably provoke the greater general interest, but both are suggestive of the tremendous possibilities that lie within this new medium.

For the uninitiated, "Pictura, Adventure in Art" (Pictura Films) makes an ideal introduction to art film forms and techniques. It comprises six short films—five made in Europe, one in America—which have been re-edited and tied together to form a feature. Vincent Price, an art collector as well as an actor, appears as himself throughout the picture, our guide to the "adventure." He introduces each of its sections and their all-star narrators—Gregory Peck, Henry Fonda, Martin Gabel, and Lilli Palmer. Then follow in succession an exciting filmic interpretation of Hieronymous Bosch's "Earthly Paradise," that fantastic triptych in the Escurial Palace near Madrid; "The Legend of St. Ursula," built out of Carpaccio's paintings on this mystic theme; Spain in the middle of the eighteenth century seen through the art of Francisco Goya; Toulouse-Lautrec's acid portrait of Paris at the close of the nineteenth century; an autobiographical section on Paul Gauguin similar to "Van Gogh" (and done by the same people), and finally America's Grant Wood.

Quite an adventure to be sure, and a rewarding one. Simply by bringing art, great art, from the museums of the world to the screens of our local theatres this film serves an important function. Many of the paintings and etchings included in "Pictura" have never before been exhibited in this country anywhere. But in addition, the camera, with its wonderful facility for looking close, constantly reveals aspects of an artist's work that would be overlooked by any but the trained observer. And there is more. The visuals, allied to an informed commentary, as in the Gauguin section, create an impact, a significance far greater than mere words or pictures alone; while the Bosch and Carpaccio sequences, both by Luciano Emmer, one of the pioneers in art films, indicate how successfully a work of art can be dissected and reconstructed to reveal fully the artist's original intent. The theme, the emotional climate remains. But through dramatic revelation of significant details—through close-ups and cutting and music—an art experience comparable to viewing the original is produced.

Not that there isn't room for criticism in "Pictura." The juxtaposition of different art techniques—painting, etching, lithography—in the Goya and Toulouse-Lautrec episodes seems unfortunate in film, although it is something we accept without second thought in any museum visit. Lilli Palmer's narration of the Toulouse-Lautrec section is unpleasantly maudlin, irritatingly patronizing. Color, of course, is missed throughout but perhaps especially so with Gauguin. And to end on Wood, even granting the producer's estimable desire to conclude with an American artist, is a regrettable choice. Surely a better artist

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should have been found, one to rank with the illustrious masters with whom he must be coupled in this picture. And yet, despite these reservations, "Pictura, Adventure in Art" ranks as an important film—the first American-produced feature to bring great art to the screen on a popular level. It should be seen by everyone.

* * *

"St. Matthew Passion" (Academy Productions) is far more special. Here painting and sculpture are used not for themselves, but to illustrate the text of Bach's mighty oratorio. Religious canvases from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, from painters as various as Bosch and Raphael, as Caravaggio and Van Honthorst, are brought together to tell through pictures the story of the Crucifixion. The results are not always fortunate. Some of the art works lend themselves all too readily to purposes of mere illustration—and invariably seem weaker than the Bach music demands. But some by their own strength seem to work *against* the score, exceeding a mere illustrative function. And many are just too sentimental and sweet to match Bach's musical austerity.

Technically, too, the film has weaknesses. Robert Flaherty in re-editing and titling the American version has done much to make it flow smoothly, but what was already in the camera he was powerless to change. Separate views remain motionless on the screen for far too long, or the camera's movement is at odds with the text. At the tense moment when Judas demands of Jesus, "Is it I? Is it I?," Bach's orchestral *agitato* is accompanied by a slow, smooth pan down a canvas. Even so, there is enough here to suggest that in stronger directorial hands than Ernst Marischka's this art technique might lead somewhere. The visual accompaniment to the beautiful aria, "I would beside my Lord be watching," for example, composed out of six fairly equal paintings, builds a simple but very affecting counterpart to the music. As to the "Passion" itself, it is well performed by the Vienna Philharmonic under Von Karajan with the Viennese Singverein and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Elisabeth Hoengen, Karl Schmitt Walter, Walter Ludwig, and Hans Braun as soloists. The voices, singing in English, are beautifully recorded; the orchestra somewhat less so. In all, the film covers about a quarter of the complete oratorio and forms an ambitious, if not altogether effective, attempt to weld two arts together—but certainly worth the attention of anyone interested in either of them.

—Arthur Knight.

TV and Radio

ST. GEORGE WITHOUT A DRAGON

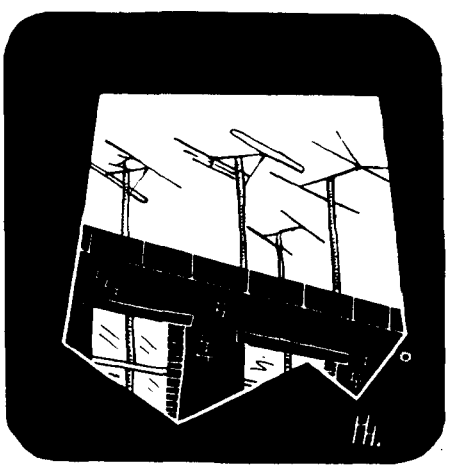
BEING in an experimental mood these days, CBS has recently launched "The People Act" (in the East, Sunday nights), which is the first radio series to emanate from the laboratory of the Ford Foundation TV-Radio Workshop. "The People Act" was well birthed. Second birthed might be more exact, as the series traces a linear relationship, if I remember correctly, to a sustaining ancestor on NBC that went by the name "Living—1950." Odd that the "experimental" workshop should choose, as its first project, to work over an old friend. Not that old friends have no resurrection values; on the contrary, the principle of repeating excellent broadcasts is one that radio, and now television, has yet to appreciate fully.

Unfortunately, "The People Act" is, to date, a disappointment; and this must be said despite the fact that it is presented by a national committee of educators under the chairmanship of Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, president of Pennsylvania State College; that its object is "to stimulate the fuller use of democracy's procedures and instrumentalities in the solution of community problems," and that it offers, to listeners who may be moved to group action for good causes, contact with appropriate social mechanisms.

"The People Act" is not effective because, primarily, it is not about people, but about convenient stereotypes of "People" which do-gooders are accustomed to trot out of the hothouse at the first sound of the "let's get constructive" bell. There are other reasons, but this is paramount.

Technically, the tape recording techniques employed are ancient radio history, fundamental forms used unimaginatively. (These observations are based on three of the first four programs offered by the series.) The programs are dull; they command no attention. Real people are used to play "real" people in dramatized re-creations of scenes—an indefensible device, since the real people are simply bad, amateur actors. There is no premium in actuality per se. Often, it is sheer liability.

Furthermore, there is an inconsistent mixing of re-created scenes in which people "play" themselves with other scenes in which they "are" themselves. Robert Trout, the narrator, is a professional voice, not at all in key with the unpolished performances of the actuality cast. The narrative passages given him to read by writer-producer Irving Gitlin (and in the fourth program by writer-editor Fred Fried) were mechanical, terse to the point of vacuity, and incessant, disturbing interruptions of any semblance of continuity of mood.



THESE, nothwithstanding, are mere technical faults, not one of them above the power of strength of interior idea, situation, or revelation of character and drama, however crude. But there is no drama in "The People Act"—merely exterior episode. The programs purport to tell the stories of citizens who have organized community groups to effect needed social change. Thus, one story dealt with the women in Gary, Indiana, who destroyed a gambling syndicate; another with parents in Arlington, Virginia, who forced a reactionary school board into constructing much-needed new buildings; a third with a Mexican-American neighborhood that had won a respected place for itself in the life of Kansas City, Missouri. In all three programs there was a sort of abstract, faceless goodness generalized from an assortment of citizens who passed the microphone too swiftly to leave any impression. Yet there was no portrait of a single human being identifiable in depth by individual drive, emotion, attitude. Neither could one identify a human villain.

The achievements of the community groupings that served as material for the programs must, of a surety, be intensely human. Neighborhood councils, especially in industrial and minority areas, are overflowing reservoirs of frustration, anger, hope, courage,

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leadership, and bitter struggle, both from without and within the group. Occasionally, the true visage of reality peers for a moment from behind the actuality curtain of "The People Act," only to vanish in the heavy onrush of the story.

Why? One explanation may spring from the fact that the programs are cast in twenty-five-minute packages. The stories, as journalistically reported, are broad canvases. Twenty-five minutes is far too short a time in which to do them justice. They emerge as mere cartoons. If commercial radio's rigid formalization of time forbids distribution of programs longer than thirty minutes, it might be well to employ devices other than the episodic to catch the meaning of the people acting.

What is the listener supposed to learn from "The People Act"? That he, too, can help solve his community problems by sending a postal card to Dr. Eisenhower? I hope that I am wrong, but I venutre to predict that it will not be the new two-penny rate that keeps the amount of inquiry modest. These ready-made social vitamins have little potency. The listener can sense that life is far more complex and the struggle far more bitter than these oversimplified lessons in how-to-triumph-over-evil suggest. With a sure instinct he rejects them as nostrums—and here, perhaps, is the ultimate sadness, for St. George looks silly without a dragon.

—Robert Lewis Shayon.

Music to My Ears

THE GUTHRIE-GERARD "CARMEN"—A NEW PUCCINI OPERA—ENTER HARSHAW

IF there's anything less grateful than reviving an opera like "Cosi fan tutte," which nobody knows, it's reviving one like "Carmen," which everybody knows. Rudolf Bing, rounding out his second season of new productions at the Metropolitan, played his final card from the pack with which Carmen reads her fate, thus doubly chancing his fate. The new "moves" were devised by stage director Tyrone Guthrie.

To me his work was almost wholly impressive—deadly serious, responsible, and intellectually valid. On the whole, I found his scheme more adroit than the people who carried it out (save for the ever-able Gerard as designer). Risë Stevens, Richard Tucker, and Frank Guarrera are solid citizens vocally and well-meaning artists. But to be Carmen, José, or Escamillo calls for something more than this—a dash, an *esprit*, an unstudied predilection as well as a studied elaboration of it. And, at the critical firing point on the conductor's podium, Fritz Reiner seemed to me less than an ideal intermediary, providing refinement where one wanted intensity, a kind of aloof professionalism where just a tinge of amateur, selfless enthusiasm would have provided the kind of vitality the first performance wanted (musically).

As production, in theatre terms, "Carmen" struck me as the most interesting and resourceful of Bing's two seasons. For the first act, Gerard provided an excellent set on two levels—the factory higher, the soldiers below, with a broad staircase between that allowed for a good deal of well-planned movement by Guthrie. Also, the elevation permitted an effective moment as Carmen pushed José from the topmost step, and the guards behind him went down like ten pins. For the Lillas Pastia cafe, Gerard's concept was striking and suggestive of the disreputable; for the third act his mountain pass was conventional but effectively shadowed. The mooted alteration of Act IV from a square outside the bullring to an interior adjacent to the arena didn't jar at all. Given a second, later look at the whole problem, Bizet's librettists might have come to a similar view of the situation.

Guthrie's activation of the stage settings is mostly fervent, direct, and in a consistent line. He has a weakness for Mamoulian-like groupings, and there's bound to be a point in every act where somebody stands on a chair, a table, or a trunk to carry the eye to a point. Virtuous in itself, the idea becomes a cliche when overdone. However, the invented far exceeds the contrived, and out of a hundred details but four or five jar.

A particular one that jarred to me was the treatment of the "Habanera," in which Carmen is lifted aloft by the male swains and toted around José in tantalizing arcs. Miss Stevens bore this trial with stoic concentration, and worked with all the force of her fine intelligence to make herself Carmen. She is a much more adept, accurate singer of Carmen's music than she was a few years ago, but without either the tremulous low tones or the thrilling high ones to make Bizet's points in the theatre. Her dirty costume in Act I was admirably realistic, but it was plain that the heart beneath it was pure.

In similar degree, Tucker as José and Guarrera as Escamillo failed to convince. Among tenors of the time, Tucker is a paragon; but one missed the melting tones to atone for the all-too-solid flesh. He became in the closing moments (as he does as Turiddu in "Cavalleria") a rather impressively distracted maniacal killer; but

"Dammit! Why can't you hate opera like other husbands?"

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the acts before played him, rather than vice versa. Escamillo's music ranges through an expanse that has mocked the best baritones, and Guarrera is only among the good ones.

There was any amount of exact orchestral playing under Reiner's skilled direction, but an even larger amount of stickwaving that expressed his perfect ease in the task and his detachment from the common one. A cool head is an admirable attribute for a conductor; but there should be heat somewhere—preferably in the bloodstream.

* * *

An under-advertised event earlier in the week was the introduction of a new opera by Puccini entitled "Musetta," with Ljuba Welitch in the title role. Of special curiosity was the odd construction of the work, in which the principal performer did not appear at all in Act I, or more than briefly in Act III. In Act II, which found her surrounded by some minor characters named Mimi, Rodolfo, Marcello, etc., Miss Welitch aroused Sinatra-like squeals of delight from some of the standees by posturing grotesquely, standing on a chair, riding Marcello's shoulders pick-a-back, and otherwise disgracing herself in terms of responsible artistry. Vocally, there was a good deal to be said for the points she made, but they were dearly bought.

Amid this incriminating display, Dorothy Kirsten sang the best Mimi of her Metropolitan career, with all the clarity of old and a degree of humanity in her voice that is a newfound strength this year. Tagliavini's Rodolfo had some fine moments—and a few strained ones—with Silveri a first-rate Marcello. Alberto Erede conducted splendidly, when Welitch was not usurping his prerogatives.

Further history was made during the week when Margaret Harshaw sang Brünnhilde for the first time, with power, assurance, and a massive kind of vocal resource. Little trace remains of the woody mezzo sound of old; the voice is now pure soprano, and if not lustrous or colorful, remarkably strong and healthy. Moreover, she was a convincing figure on the stage and a powerful factor in the drama. Save for the Waltraute of Elisabeth Hoengen—artful, but voice-worn—the cast (Svanholm, Schoeffler, Ernster) was as before, with Fritz Stiedry conducting. As more than one person noted, the evening was doubly significant; for Miss Harshaw made her impressive first performance as Brünnhilde on the same night that Kirsten Flagstad pronounced her valedictory to the concert stage in Carnegie Hall. —IRVING KOLODIN.

Should an author devote his whole life to writing — despite the fact that he cannot make much money, that his books won't sell, that he has a wife and children whom he has to support? This novel tackles one of the most persistent problems of the creative man or woman today. It is the powerful story of Dillard Crowley, the author of five books that have had "a good press, but a starvation sale." How he makes the choice between his wife and his work, between critical and popular success, is the provocative theme of

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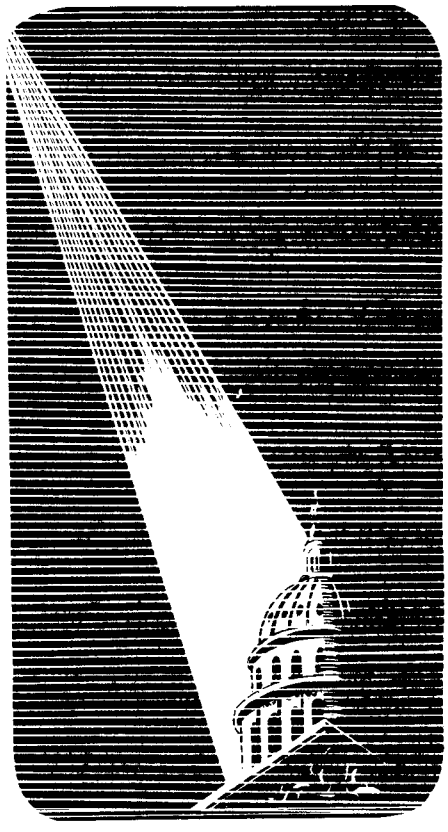
THE USA
(*Continued from page 23*)

author does not blush easily. He admits that intermarriage lies within his definition of integration.

While this is an explosive doctrine in America, it may not actually start more fights than Mr. Redding's reminiscences of associations with Communists who wooed but failed to win his affection. Indeed, there is in this passage of the essay an interesting parallel to Richard Wright's account in "The God That Failed." Mr. Redding says, among other things, "They were going to make 'No Day of Triumph' a best seller. They were going to put me, as a writer, they said, in the same income class with Howard Fast and Richard Wright."

It is hard to see how an essayist could leave himself between two hotter fires, but the position is at once typical of the author's courage and his tough-mindedness.



Failure of Red Propaganda

COMMUNISM VERSUS THE NEGRO. By William A. Nolan. Chicago: Henry Regnery Co. 276 pp. $3.50.

By Henry Lee Moon

ALTHOUGH the winning of Negro converts has been a major objective of the Communist Party of the United States for more than a quarter of a century, it was not until the past year that this phase of the Party program has received serious, book-length treatment. First came Wilson Record's sober and comprehensive analysis, "The Negro and the Communist Party." Now comes another equally thorough study, "Communism Versus the Negro," by Father William A. Nolan, a Roman Catholic priest connected with the Institute of Social Order of St. Louis University.

The purpose of this volume, the author asserts, is to describe "the attempt of the Communist Party to exploit the miseries and misfortunes of America's most unjustly treated minority." To this end, he delved deep into Communist literature — documents, books, pamphlets, and periodicals. He also read non-Communist publications on the race question, including the Negros press. The result is a detailed and ably documented account of the futile Communist efforts to indoctrinate Negro Americans.

The history of these efforts is reviewed in relation to the conditions Negroes face in this country and against the background of the global objectives of the Soviet Union as reflected by that country's international political instrument, the Communist Party. The restrictions "which the American caste system imposes upon Negroes have produced a situation favorable to the spread of *any* propaganda which promises relief from it. On the scope and intensity of these grievances the Communists naturally relied," Father Nolan asserts.

Given this promising situation, why, then, have the Communists failed so dismally? Partly, the author points out, because of the Negro's essential Americanism and his abiding conviction that his objective of full integration is attainable within the framework of the American constitutional system. But this is not all. There is also, he indicates, the inability of the Communist Party to follow an independent and consistent line on behalf of the Negro because its policies are determined by factors extrinsic to his needs and aspiration; that is, by the exigencies of the Soviet role in international affairs.

"If the Communist Party would entirely adapt itself to the problems of Negro life in the United States," Father Nolan concludes, "its propaganda might receive serious attention. But that is precisely what the party cannot do. Every one of its activities must be subordinated to the aggressive ambition of a foreign power, whose interests frequently conflict with those of *American* Negroes . . . So long as conditions continue to improve in this country . . . and so long as the Party continues to put Russia first, Communist propaganda *among American Negroes will not* succeed."

The inadaptability of the party to the Negro's situation in America is dramatized by its self-confessed abandonment of the fight for Negro rights during World War II, its recurrent adherence to the chimerical concept of the Negro in the South as a "nation," and its rejection of a realistic approach to the problems of the Negro. Debate within the ranks of the Party, as recounted by the author, would seem to indicate that pursuit of this unproductive line is not evidence of sheer stupidity on the part of American Communists, but rather of their subservience to the Kremlin.

While recognizing the failure of the Party to make substantial inroads in the Negro community, the author seems dismayed by the paucity of anti-Communist criticism among Negroes. This he attributes to the intellectual seduction of the more articulate Negroes by the Communists and to fear of reprisal. It is true that a small number of Negroes, like their white counterparts, view criticism of the Soviet Union as somehow immoral and evaluation of the Communist Party on the same standards applied to Republicans and Democrats as sinful. But most Negroes remain silent not out of fear, but rather out of the realization that the "clear and present danger" to their interests stems not from Communism, but from "crackerism," the base ideology of the Ku Klux Klan, the Dixiecrats, and other white supremacists. Nevertheless, the Communists have been berated by Negro critics, usually on specific issues. One or two others have become professional anti-Communists.

As the title implies, "Communism Versus the Negro" maintains that Communism is the Negro's enemy. The evidence presented, culled primarily from Party sources, certainly and ably demonstrates that the Communist Party is not, and cannot be, a dependable friend of the Negro American.

Henry Lee Moon is the author of "Balance of Power: The Negro Vote."

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USA Notes

CONGRESS: ITS CONTEMPORARY ROLE. By Ernest S. Griffith. New York University Press. $3.50. Mr. Griffith looks upon a much criticized American Congress and is well pleased with what he sees. In its struggle against Communism and the lesser threats of selfish interests and irresponsible bureaucracy, the Congress, he says, draws its strength from the fluidity of the Constitution, its specialized committee system, and the use of experts. While admitting the enormous potentiality of the Presidential dictatorship danger, he believes the legislature has shown itself able and ready to wield formidable weapons in the war with the executive. Increasingly inclined to rely upon informed opinion regarding complex domestic and foreign issues, the Congress is still able in the twentieth century to formulate international policy, still willing to take the general view of national matters in accordance with the best interests of the nation. Certainly the author is aware of the unfortunate continuing effects of pressure groups, localisms, and plain ignorance, but he puts up a spirited defense of the loosely knit American party system over against the British Parliamentary system as responding particularly well to the exigencies of "a dispersive society" and preserving what he considers the indispensable spirit of independence among Representatives and Senators.

The book is popular, brief, fair-minded, and for the most part puts its points sharply. It makes out what is perhaps a not unshakable case *for* the Congress. Mr. Griffith is by no means totally uncritical of the legislators, but there is another side to the medal. This one, however, is worth showing now and again.

—JOHN C. CAIRNS.

THE COURT AND THE CONSTITUTION. By Owen J. Roberts. Harvard University Press. $2. Former Associate Justice Roberts is concerned with the three fields of taxation, regulation, and the due process in which the national government and the state governments have come into conflict. After a relatively brief but liberally illustrated examination of the evidence resulting from some hundreds of cases, he reaches the conclusion that the Supreme Court has failed to fulfil the mandate given it, and has not maintained the original division of powers between the two loci of sovereignty. The framers of the Constitution "meant that in all matters not committed, the states were to retain the attributes of sovereignty," and

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he finds that this sharp division has been blurred to the point where the Court has increasingly circumscribed the pristine powers of the individual states. Moreover, Federal jurisprudence has been subject to great variation and uncertainty. Admitting that the continual expansion of Federal power and the contraction of state powers has probably been inevitable, he nevertheless believes the Court has tended unnecessarily to yield its own views to those of the Congress in matters affecting the reach of Federal power. "Vox populi, vox Dei," he notes, "was not the theory on which the charter was drawn." This, then, is a conservative appeal for reconsideration of the role of the Court, and for a return to an independence of judgment more in keeping with the original design of the makers of the Constitution, who wished to maintain and protect a dual form of Government which had no parallel in political history. It is, of course, only one side of the case; but it is well and authoritatively argued.

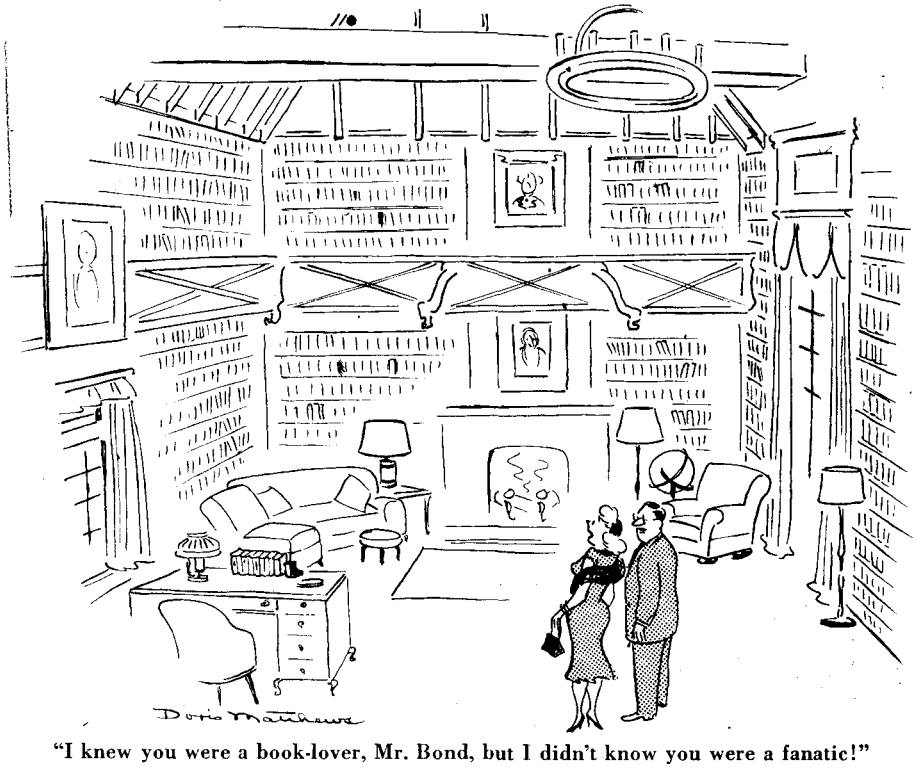
—JOHN C. CAIRNS.

THE NEGRO AND FUSION POLITICS IN NORTH CAROLINA. By Helen G. Edmonds. University of North Carolina Press. $5. Back in the 1890's in North Carolina, the impossible happened. In fact, it happened twice. Unaided by Federal bayonets, the Republican party managed to win two state-wide elections, and thereby gained for itself local political power—that is, true power in the meaning of Southern politics.

How this miracle came to pass is—unfortunately for our present-day Republican National Committee —owing to a combination of ingredients incapable of contemporary reproduction. The Democrats who disgraced themselves and the delicate flower of Southern womanhood were those arch-conservative gentlemen, the post-bellum Bourbons. The hordes which overcame them were the unwashed, depressed farmers who had turned desperately to populism, and the tattered Republicans who numbered a sprinkling of surviving carpetbaggers and Federal jobholders and drew their mass from Mr. Lincoln's Negroes and the plain disgruntled.

In her very able piece of research and reconstruction of an episode that is virtually forgotten, Miss Edmonds traces the meteoric rise, temporary supremacy, and abrupt fall of this liberal coalition. Her principal attention is to the Negro who contributed most (though by no means all) of the votes that thrust the GOP into unaccustomed power. A Negro herself, she analyzes with admirable restraint the tensions within the Republican-Populist coalition, the efforts of reform, and the Democratic "white supremacy" campaigns that ultimately turned the angels out. And when the upstart Republicans were finally flung out of office in 1901, the Democrats made certain that it couldn't happen again: they disfranchised the Negro and, just to be sure, impeached the Republican justices of the State Supreme Court. All told, an excellent recounting of a depressing but instructive episode in American history.

—PETER R. LEVIN.



"I knew you were a book-lover, Mr. Bond, but I didn't know you were a fanatic!"

PROSE OF PROMISE

(*Continued from page* 16)

are revealed through their own thoughts and memories as well as their constant flow of conversation as they probe for contact with each other. Since a book written in the Joycean manner of personal revelation need have no plot or drama, the burden is thrown on the quality of the author's mind. Fortunately, it is a mind that is subtle, intellectual, compassionate, and astringent, a word he often uses. It is like a chess game played on several levels of consciousness, but there is a sermon in it for the thoughtful concerning rootless people who have lost their bearings. The barren desert is their future unless they reach the security of the airfield, which might conceivably be interpreted as the Church of Rome.

The remaining first novels are in a different vein, and both are translated from the French. Georges Blond's "The Plunderers" is a gruesome story of the slaughter of an immense colony of seals on an untouched island in the North Pacific when a Russian navigator discovered it in the days of Catherine the Great. It is a strange epic of man against nature reminiscent of Melville's "Moby Dick," for a part of the book is devoted to chapters on the journeys and mating habits of seals during the three months when the bulls surround themselves with their harems of doe-eyed females and the pups learn to swim. The rest is the story of a dashing and amorous emissary of the Empress to whom she gave an ill-starred fleet of ships to find the legendary rookery. Crazed with greed and blood-lust, his mutinous sailors fell upon thousands of seals and murdered them. The spectacle was too much for even a member of Catherine's court. Wounded by his sailors, he drifted to his death in an open boat.

The fifth of Clément Richer's six novels, "Ti-Coyo and His Shark" is the first to be published in this country. It is a delightful fable of the island of St. Pierre, before and after Mt. Pelée erupted and destroyed its inhabitants, written with the deliberate naivete that has power to enchant grown-ups and children and enable them to delight in evil deeds and the shedding of blood. It seems that there was a small brown boy of oddly assorted parents who played with a baby shark. By the time he was old enough to think of running off with the daughter of the most aristocratic plantation owner on the island the shark had become a monster

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with endless rows of retractable teeth. He had made Ti-Coyo's family rich because no one else dared to harvest the coins the passengers on steamers threw into the harbor. Too many of them had been eaten by Manidou. When the mountain blew up the family and the girl escaped to a neighboring island. Naturally, she inherited her father's wealth, and Manidou devoured so many corpses floating on the sea that he had no appetite for a whole day. It is one of those enchanting stories in which wicked people live happily ever after and has something of the flavor of Richard Hughes's "The Innocent Voyage." It may be recommended as an appetizer before consuming some of the more somber and longer books we have recommended in this brief list of the first novels of last year.

Bookmarks

ONE of George Orwell's youthful recollections, as recorded in the similitude of a novel in "Burmese Days," was of the "book-wallah," an itinerant native salesman who went from station to station peddling his wares to British residents. The book-wallah exchanged any book in his pack for four annas (eight cents) and any other book, Bibles excepted. The period of which Orwell was writing was 1926. Ex-Sergeant Edward Lazare, editor of "American Book-Prices Current," tells us that when he was serving with the American forces in India in 1944 he found the book-wallah not only still flourishing, but riding the war boom nicely. Prices were higher, naturally —eight annas and a book. The wartime book-wallah, moreover, went in for some higher-bracket specialties. He rented "Lady Chatterley's Lover" (ungelded version) for thirty-two rupees (say ten dollars) and redeemed it for twenty rupees. He carried his wares, alike in 1926 and 1944, in a bag slung over his shoulder.

* * *

None of this department's readers, naturally, ever has any doubts about the pronunciation of *short-lived.*

* * *

Ours is a *yes*-less era. The simple affirmative has given way to the tangential, and we are likely to get, in reply to a direct question, *all right, O.K., sure* (or, worse, *surely*), *you bet, I'll say,* or any of a dozen others. *Definitely* and *absolutely* seem to be losing their grip—or are we being over-optimistic?

* * *

In writing, haste makes waste-paper. —J. T. W.

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FICTION
(*Continued from page 22*)

the morning. But it was sporting of him to dedicate the book "for my severest critic" after he had written: "the critic is to art what the cricket is to nature: a creature who attempts to detract from the songs of birds by rubbing his legs together in an unholy din."

Fiction Notes

FRONTIER INCIDENT. By S. B. Hough. Crowell. $2.75. Mr. Hough has constructed this taut little psychological melodrama around the fancy of a group of travelers accidentally caught up in a local revolution on the Persian desert. Thrown into jail they are subjected to an inquisition designed to enlist their support for the new order. The logic and the methods of the Inquisitor are the author's chief concern, and he makes of these a fearsome thing as the struggle to break the will of the captured ones gains momentum.

The writing here, the spare plotting and the concentration, has some of the quality of the newer French writers. Unfortunately, Mr. Hough leaves too much unexplained, is too slapdash with his conclusion. As a result his book never rises above the level of a thriller. As such it has moments of genuine excitement.

—*Nikol Schattenstein.*

Rosamond Marshall—"amorous affairs."

JANE HADDEN. By Rosamond Marshall. Prentice-Hall. $3. The lovely wench pictured on the jacket of this book has something more than the more obvious appurtenances. So help me, she's a novelist, way back in the eighteenth century, when the ladies—if we can trust the writers of historical romances such as this one—were usually much too occupied with amorous affairs to bother with so mundane a profession. However, you can trust Miss Marshall, the amorous affairs are here too. They involve the handsome, Byronic Cap Castain, who is also a novelist. As the jacket truthfully informs us, he has only to snap his fingers and Jane melts into his arms. Well, he's a great finger snapper. Oh yes, Dr. Johnson and Boswell are trotted on stage to supply atmosphere, and there are some perfectly horrid scenes in Newgate Prison.

The publishers tell us that Miss Marshall's previous novels have reached a total sale of five million copies. They can start counting up that next million.

WHO DID WHAT TO FEDALIA? By Meredith Wilson. Doubleday. $2.50. Despite the prurient suggestiveness of the title, this is an innocent little number which will not harm—or help—anyone. Nobody, in fact, did anything to Fedalia, except persuade her that she could sing when she really couldn't. Fedalia was a graham-cracker-fed little lady from Fort Madison, Iowa, who came to the big city prepared to shake the world of radio. The gimmick in this artless fable is that she didn't. She met a lot of nice people, had a few mild brushes with romance, learned that she wasn't meant for radio, and went home to marry the boy next door. There is one rather startling episode with a sadistic uncle which seems to have strayed in from another program. Other than that this is an inconsequential piece of fluff which you can take or leave alone. Personally I'd leave it alone and go back to listening to Mr. Wilson on the radio.

HOME TO TENNESSEE. By Alfred Leland Crabb. Bobbs-Merrill. $3. This, by my count, is the sixth novel in which Mr. Crabb has celebrated his by now notorious love affair with the city of Nashville. Nashville has been captured—the time is, of course, the days of the War Between the States—occupied, recaptured, and rebuilt. This time it is in the last days of the war. Confederate spies are slipping in and out of Union headquarters with the agility of eels. There is also a romance. This one involves Lieutenant Beasley Nichols, Confederate spy and former Shakespearean actor, as gallant a gentleman as ever swashed a buckle. The girl is Hunter Cragwall, but she stays pretty much in the background. There are also quite a number of scenes evidently intended as comic relief. —EDWARD J. FITZGERALD.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

TROUBLED NINETEENTH-CENTURY MARRIAGES

Professor Dan H. Laurence, of New York University, asks you to identify either the husband or the wife and either the story or the author in the items listed below. Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 53.

1. A man, while drunk, sells his wife and daughter at a county fair to a sailor, for five guineas.
2. A husband is willing to forgive his wife's pre-marital indiscretion, but she runs off into the stormy night and dies near her lover's grave, outside the cemetery gates.
3. A man marries and cruelly mistreats the sister of the rival who had married the woman he loves.
4. A woman marries a man who has confined her half-sister to an asylum to keep her from revealing the fact that he has no real claim to his title and estate.
5. A husband, jealous of a potential rival who is his own cousin, wills his fortune to his wife on the condition that she does not marry the younger man.
6. A woman compromises herself with a lord by accepting money from him and is deserted by her outraged husband.
7. A wife successfuly defends herself in a divorce suit and refuses to return to her husband, who, in his illnes, is willing to ask her forgiveness.
8. A man attempts to marry his daughter's governess, despite the fact that he has an insane wife secreted within the confines of his home.
9. A young Scot is driven mad by a brother whose sweetheart he had married during his brother's absence, believing him dead.
10. A lord marries a young girl secretly to avoid incurring the displeasure of a jealous queen and is tricked into causing his wife's death.

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THE LOT OF AUTHORS

(Continued from page 14)

the domestic trend unmistakable, did book prices begin to rise from the old level of $2.50 to $3 and $3.50. The author was in the front-line trench, insofar as publishers sought to hold the price of books at the old level. Once publishers gave way to the inevitable, the situation pretty well equalized itself with the financial results to the author as briefly stated above. When one of the manufacturing industries now hands the publisher a price increase, that publisher today thinks of handing the public an increase in the cost of books. Finding that insufficient to solve his problem, that publisher is still apt, however, to turn to the author, as the next easiest target, saying (a) take less royalty, and (b) give me some of what you're getting from selling your product to others. This is not to say that in certain rare and special cases the publisher is not entitled to share in such collateral income. It is the growing idea that the publisher is inalienably entitled to share in all of such monies that must be resisted.

Third, most authors complain that their books aren't advertised enough. They're mistaken. Many books, unsalable, or moderately unsalable, are over-advertised. Many a publisher's advertising dollar is either misspent or actually wasted. This is perhaps not the wise thing for a literary agent to say, but it is my strong conviction. There's an obvious difficulty that book advertising faces. With rare exceptions the book publisher's product is ephemeral. In six months it's gone and the public has forgotten it. No general publisher, with the possible exception of one, and with the exception of certain imprints in the mystery field, has ever had an impact on the public. The public would as lief buy a book from A as from X, and does. What's wrong with book advertising is certainly the subject for another piece. What the average author can do is to stop bemoaning the fact that he hasn't had a five-thousand-dollar or a ten-thousand-dollar advertising campaign. In most cases the difference between a five-thousand-dollar campaign and one of one-half that size wouldn't make a difference of two hundred and fifty copies in sales.

Fourth, authors should press for still further revisions in the tax law insofar as it effects them. Section 107 (B) of the Internal Revenue Code is fine as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough, and it helps only the rare

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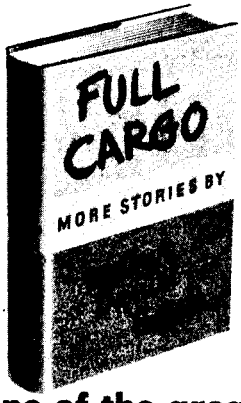

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author and the average author not at all. This is the provision in the tax law that says that an author may spread back over a period not to exceed three tax years immediately preceding the year in which the work was completed his income from that work if he has received from that work in the taxable year at least 80 per cent of the gross amount received from the work during the following periods: (a) the taxable year, (b) the years preceding the taxable year, (c) the year succeeding the taxable year—and if he can also prove to the satisfaction of the tax examiner that he actually spent three years, or more, in creating the work in question. This is too restrictive and hedged about with "ifs" and "buts" to help many writers. In fact, I have not personally known any author that the provision did help. It obviously should be drastically liberalized.

Fifth—and most important of all—the author, and especially the talented author, should, in plain words, get back to work. By work, I mean sheer output, sheer number of words written. In the field of serious fiction who today can compare in simple bulk with the giants of the nineteenth century—Dickens, Scott, Poe, Melville, Hardy, Hawthorne, Thackeray — or with those of a later day—Howells, James, Conrad, Wells, Galsworthy, Walpole, and Bennett? In recent years we have had a Sinclair Lewis, a Somerset Maugham, a J. P. Marquand. But who else? Who else, did you ask? I'll tell you. There are others but, unfortunately, they're not considered serious writers by many. They understand that if they're to live by writing, they must write, and write, and write. They're the writers of historical romance, and the writers of mystery and detective fiction—Frances Parkinson Keyes, Thomas Costain, Van Wyck Mason, Ellery Queen, Erle Stanley Gardner, and so on. They know all about the seat of the pants, the hard chair, the unfriendly typewriter, and the lonely room.

IT IS only the writers of great industry who can support themselves by pen alone. The others must rely on the income of a husband or wife, a part-time job, or private means. I venture to think that there are no more than a hundred writers in the whole country who support themselves and their families by writing alone, and if one narrows this down to income from book writing alone, one cuts the number in half. A dim prospect, especially for the beginning writer, but there it is. I also think that the average publisher puts in more time on the job, in his office and out of it, than 95 per cent of all the authors on his list.

A serious author of today is considered to be doing pretty well if 100,000 to 150,000 words issue from his typewriter every three years! Any number of nineteenth-century giants did that every six months. But the bulk of today's book authors take up their time worrying about things other than writing and creating—income taxes, their publishers, their publicity, their agents (New York and Hollywood), their cocktail parties, their advertising, their psychoanalysts. They think about everything but getting on with the job of writing and of letting the literary chips fall where they may.

Owners of magazines, movie companies, book clubs, reprint houses, radio and television stations, play producers, not only beat the bushes for grist for their mill but hire expensive and experienced talent to seek out, in public place and in by-path, the new ideas, the fresh expression of an old one, the new talent. So, let the serious, hard-working author stick to his chair, his typewriter, and his lonely room. The world is panting, the world is eager, to find him out. The rewards today are bigger in every sense than in any time in the whole history of civilization, for the producing author. Let the product be there, and the publishers, bookstores, distributors, and the public will find the way.

And if I, as a literary agent, be accused of wanting more commissions on more profitable authors why, so be it! I do.

Of Love

By Carleton Drewry

OF love I have little to say,
Having so much to consider,
Knowing all gain gone away,
Being with bereavement bitter.

Between the double wreck
And a sorry singular end,
Between love and love's lack
I have learned not foe from
friend.

For how may love in kind
Succeed itself and establish
Enough for one mouth and mind
To reaffirm and publish?—

Whose heart, past actual doom
Beats, bids the body live
Till utter death become
Its own alternative.

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THE CONDITION OF THE WRITER

(*Continued from page 13*)

Let's hear a few of the beefs. "He did a miserable job of promotion. This was a second novel; the first sold 100,000. Nevertheless, because advance orders were not 'substantial' enough, promotion was practically nil. Also, many people—in four or five large cities—have informed me they were unable to buy the book in (large) bookstores." "Poor business methods is a fair complaint." "Books over-priced; advertising copy uninteresting; very favorable authoritative review and comment not exploited." "My publisher was more interested in subsidiary rights than he was in selling the original book. He did nothing to promote the book. Promotion and publicity were nil. He was content to sit still and grow fat on subsidiary rights." "Wish my book had not been published so close to Christmas, and I wish it had been advertised a little more." "Not aggressive enough." The most frequent complaints were insufficient promotion (7) and insufficient advertising (5). There was one complaint of poor editing, and one about a bad deal with a minor book club.

AFTER digesting the data provided by *The Saturday Review* questionnaire, I turned back to the famous Cheney report, formally known as "Economic Survey of the Book Industry, 1930-1931." Said the Cheney report:

"To the author, his book is the very essence of his being—very often his only throw of the dice for current prosperity. To the publisher, the book is just one of a number of troubles and one chance out of many to gain profit—or to lose it . . . The returns of a large number of honest, earnest, and hard-working writing craftsmen, perhaps of a majority of the authors who depend on books, are not commensurate with their efforts. This is true not because of what the publishers get out of publishing but because of what they do not put into it . . . The author has a right to expect that his book, if it is worth publishing at all, will be given real publishing attention and a fair chance—and most books do not get them . . .

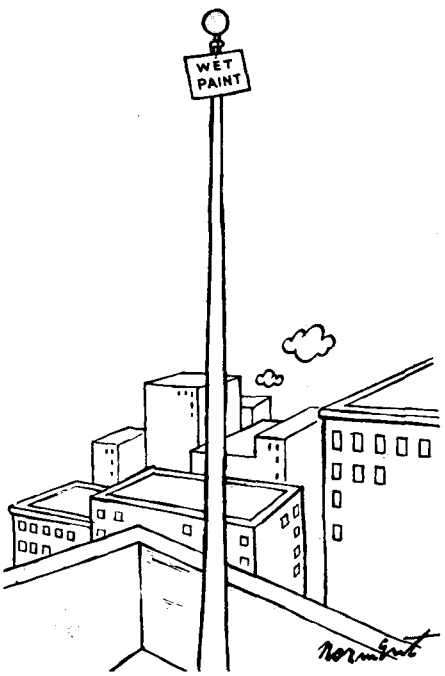
"*A subsidized industry* would seem to be the ultimate end towards which trade book publishing is tending . . . That it is subsidized to some degree already is clear, at least in the case of those authors able to command good serial prices. By enabling those authors to live in the style to which they are accustomed, the magazines subsidize the book industry . . . The movies add to the subsidy.

"The author, in contract making, needs, above all, a clearer understanding of the economics of the industry and, in particular, a knowledge of the limitations to publishing operations under present conditions.

"Under present conditions increased income for authors must come from increased sales rather than increased percentages."

The passage of twenty years has only made these observations ring truer. And it is as true today as it was when the Cheney report came out that "whatever may be the sins of the distribution system, the ultimate limitation is in the book—and therefore in the author."

May I add a personal postscript? The authors' program for increased sales and increased income must be: write better books. And what are better books? Books that are so excellent in one or more respects that readers not only like them but are impelled to recommend them to others ("You *must* read Blank's new book"). Books that are so good in their way that they are talked about and thereby receive the best advertising, which is word-of-mouth and cannot be bought. Books that bring about intense reader acceptance. This is what authors can contribute to solve for the good of themselves, their publishers, and the booksellers the chronic book business crisis.



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BOOKED for TRAVEL

THE PATTER OF LOOSE FEET

IN the dead of winter with the Olympics in Oslo only weeks away, the sports news has been ticking in from places of which few Americans have ever heard. The ski team from the United States has been sliding the slopes at Wengen and racing at Grindelwald, a pair of tiny villages tucked away in the Bernese Oberland of Switzerland. You knew about them if you were a pretty hot skier or a traveler who had made his way up the mountain railway to the mighty Jungfrau. You knew about them if you were English because in summer, too, the villages were popular with Britons on holiday. And you knew about them if you were one of a handful of Americans interned in Switzerland during the war.

Wengen and Grindelwald flank the Jungfrau like a pair of decorative stone lions. You reach both villages from Interlaken, which sits between two Swiss lakes and waits for the tourists to come in summer. The train slips out of Interlaken's east station and begins the climbs to Lauterbrunnen where you change to a little toy train that chugs upward in another twenty-five minutes to Wengen. It's about the only way to get there since Wengen has neither cars nor roads. Summer or winter, it is a pleasant and picturesque place crossed by paths bordered with rustic fencing. Wengen can put up 2,500 guests, most of whom come for the air (altitude: 4,264 feet), the view (the Jungfrau is dead ahead), and the sports. There is an electrically heated, open-air swimming pool in view of the snow-covered mountains. There is sun bathing, tennis, and mountain climbing. In winter, of course, there is skiing, and the predominantly English clientele long ago formed a ski group known as the Downhill Only Club. They have given their own names to the local twists and turns which you will find are called such things as Plum Pudding Hill and Slip Cartilege Corner.

There are two T-bar lifts in Wengen and a longer one up in Kleine Scheidegg. A new *téléphérique*, or cable car, will soon run from Wengen to Männlichen, carrying forty people and skis per trip.

The Palace is "The Hotel" in Wengen. It has 220 beds, and many memories of Americans. Two hundred GI's were interned there in 1944 and stayed for six months. Most of the thirty hotels in town close between seasons, but one of the best of the few that stay open the year around is the tiny Kreuz. It has a minuscule bar adjoining a pine-paneled restaurant where for $2 you can get one of the best meals to be had in all Switzerland. Rates vary from about $5 to $7.50 a day for full pension in the Palace to $3.50 to $4 for the same arrangement in the Kreuz, tips and taxes extra.

From Wengen the train plows on past the Wengernalp to Kleine Scheidegg, a settlement at 6,762 feet where you change trains to go up to Jungfraujoch or down to Grindelwald. Kleine Scheidegg has a hotel and a number of souvenir shops, but most of all it has tourists. They pile into the mountain crossroads station by the hundreds in all manner of costume —mountaineers, millionaires, and mountebanks, some carrying haversacks, some weighted down with mink, oooing and ahing in Turkish, French, Egyptian, and Tennessee American.

From Kleine Scheidegg the train slips easily down another valley to Grindelwald, which gets my vote as the handsomest little resort in the land. In the summer it is all green and Swiss looking, with long plains of grass spotted here and there with a chalet, and in the background the ever-present mountains. Grindelwald's mountains have glaciers. The hotels are mostly small, well groomed, and comparatively inexpensive. Its biggest and most famous, the Bear Grand, which could take care of 250 people at a time, burned on January 15, 1941, when it was occupied by the Swiss Army.

—*Swiss Tourist Office.*

Young fraus on the Jungfrau.

MY personal preference is the Schwarze Adler, or Black Eagle. It is eminently Swiss, with wood paneling and overhanging eaves, a lovely view from the rear balconies, and an excellent cuisine. The Hotel Bellevue, popular for winter sportsmen, is classified 1-A, the Park Hotel Schoenegg has the famed Gydis Bar. Also recommendable are the Regina-Alpenruhe, the Schweizerhof, and the Belvedere. Rates in any of these will run roughly from $4 to $5.50 a day room and board included, but not counting tips and taxes. A good pension the likes of the Gydisdorf, for example, will stand you from $2.75 to $3.50 a day. This includes room and three meals a day!

Grindelwald was famous to those enterprising tourists who ventured up to the mountains in the sixteenth century. Real mountaineering didn't get started until 1850, with Grindelwald in the lead. The peasants became famous as climbers and after pioneering the local mountains they traveled afield to conquer the Andes, the Himalayas, and the Rockies. Kauf-

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Birdie

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... Mountain in the Rockies is ... after Christian Kaufmann, ... son is the current owner of the ...n Alpina.

...as an American named William ...tus Brevoort Coolidge of New ... who blazed many of the local ...ain trails around Grindelwald, ... he first visited in 1865 when he ...teen years old. He died in 1926 ... buried at the foot of the Wet...rn.

...veral years before the turn of the ... Grindelwald installed winter ... and the summertime guides be...the wintertime ski instructors. ...elwald's citizens branched out ... instructors too. Fritz Steuri ... a ski school in Vermont in ... the early age of American ... Erna Steuri, who is the cousin ...ver, too, and won the Women's ...ionship at Mount Hood, Oregon, ... Harriman Cup at Sun Valley ...ter before World War II ... Her trophies and her clip...ngs can be seen in Erna Steuri's ..., a souvenir shop near the ...Hotel. Since the war Rosemary Bleuer, daughter of the owner of the Hotel Hirschen, took the Silver Dollar Derby at Mount Hood in 1943, and she was one of the three Swiss girls competing at Aspen in 1950.

Now Grindelwald has the longest chair lift in Switzerland. It is also one of the prettiest, for in its early stages it skims over the heads of farmers and glides pleasantly over the open fields, blessing you with the power of flight. The lift has three intermediate stations, is four kilometers and 300 meters long, takes a half hour to get to the top. The summit, 7,220 feet above sea level, is called First, which in German means not Number One but "top of a roof."

From the last stop it is a two-hour trudge by foot to the Faulhorn Hotel on the ridgeline, one of the most inaccessible hotels in the world. It was once owned by a well-known hotelier named Pinten-Fritz who once also owned the Bellevue, now familiarly called the Pinte. Pinten-Fritz was something of a character. There was the time he was visited by a wealthy prince from India. The first morning at the hotel the prince ordered two boiled eggs. Pinten-Fritz charged him three francs an egg. The prince complained, "Are eggs so few here in Switzerland?" "No," the adroit Pinten-Fritz replied, "but Indian princes are."

Old William Augustus Brevoort Coolidge made the Faulhorn in 1874. He climbed up with his maiden aunt, in the dead of winter, and without the benefit of the easy-riding chair lift to First.

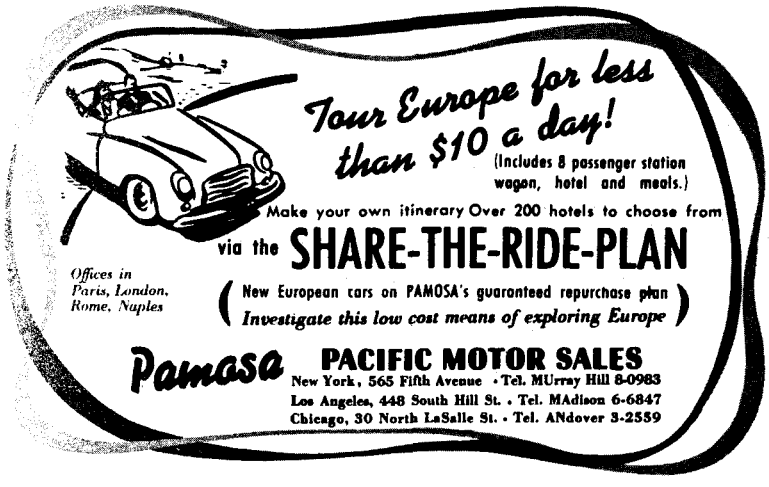
It ought to be mentioned, although it will never be believed, that one hour's walking, on the way from First to the Faulhorn, 7,000 feet in the sky, is a pleasant lake called the Bachalpsee. Wandering cows, up in the Alps for the summer, sometimes drink from it.

Among Grindelwald's other excursions are short trips to the valley's two glaciers. The lower glacier will take you about two hours for a round-trip walk, the upper glacier nearly three. There are trips by carriage to the gorge of the Lütschine, which takes about two hours and costs four francs per person. You can go out by daylight or torchlight. For those in a hurry, a bus travels to the upper glacier in twenty minutes whence it is a thirty-minute climb up 743 rustic steps to an ice grotto which has been built by guides.

Grindelwald's bashful glaciers seem to be receding as the tourists increase. Back in 1850, when this whole business started, the glacier was at the edge of the valley, right next to the crops. In those accommodating days the glaciers even supplied the ice for the local hotels.

—HORACE SUTTON.

This week's BOOKED FOR TRAVEL *section was adapted from Horace Sutton's forthcoming book, "Footloose in Switzerland," to be published early in March by Rinehart.*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TRAVELERS' TALES

LONDON DAY AND NIGHT. By Sam Lambert and illustrated by Osbert Lancaster. British Book Centre. $1. Paper-bound and pocket-size, this is one of the pleasantest little guides on London or anywhere else that has crossed this desk in many a moon. The scheme here is to take you around the clock from seven in the morning until seven in the morning, a round which could include walks and river trips, shopping, watching London at work, a look at the museums and galleries, a chat about cricket or golf, a visit to a pub, the theatres, the restaurants, the night clubs, and what to do after everything else is closed. When it recommends early-morning dives it sometimes bids you not to bother about army language you might hear, suggests you invite your taxi driver in for a cup of wee-hour tea in thick mugs served with fresh pretzels. These pages are filled with so many nooks, corners, and London nuances that it will give the traveler in twenty minutes all the inside know-how of a curious Englishman who has spent all his adult years living the full London life.

BAEDEKER'S LONDON. By Karl Baedeker. Macmillan. $3.50. The stream of books on London has been endless and shows no sign of drying up, but Baedeker has wrapped up all the facts in this twentieth edition of this work on the town, first brought out in 1878. There are a number of

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improvements. One's reading pace is no longer continually hampered by a maze of abbreviations. Some eighty small sketches serve to relieve the long stretches of type, much of it in tiny agate size. Baedeker has had to take note of such new phases of British life as devaluation. It is possible, says he, if one has few rich tastes, to live in and see London for two pounds a day, a matter of slightly more than five dollars. Familiar to devotees, however, will be the old red cover, the red string place marker, the pocket size, and the homespun admonitions to readers. Busy streets should be crossed with the traffic lights; Baedeker cautions, or at crosswalks designated by metal studs. In the big city pedestrians should always look in both directions before leaving the safety of the sidewalk. These are rudimentary notes for the rural invader, but such non-essentials float atop a sea of facts on the old town.

BRITISH COLUMBIA. By Fred Goodchild. Macmillan. $4. The vast Canadian province on the Pacific Coast has a land area of 366,255 square miles, which is to say double the size of Germany, larger than Texas, more than the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark combined.

It is so big, so rugged, and so sparsely populated that some of the country uses a radio-telephone system, set for some reason at medium frequency so that all calls from ship to shore, from mining camp to metropolis can be overheard—indeed, it is popular sport—on a household radio. About 1,200,000 live in B.C., and these citizens are some 3,594 miles from their countrymen in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on the East coast. Lumbering accounts for forty-eight cents of every income dollar, but the mining of gold, zinc, copper, silver, and lead keep many folks occupied. Oldest industry in the province is fishing. These and other facts abound in Mr. Goodchild's book about Canada's vast Pacific slab, and there are photos, a folded map, and a chapter on what might befall the tourist inside the borders.

—H. S.

On Listening to Benét's "John Brown's Body" Read as a "Talking Book for the Blind"

By M. A. DeWolfe Howe

HE THAT hath ears to hear, now, let him see!
For him there is still a vision of the mind
That spreads before the seeing and the blind
An equal pageant of reality.

No poet, no historian, alone
Could so command the art and skill to tell
The tale that works this bounteous miracle,
Yet by this two-in-one the thing was done.

In lore and art his was the mastery
To find in every hiding-place of fact
The seeds, the flowerings, of thought and act —
And he retrieved them, for all men to see.

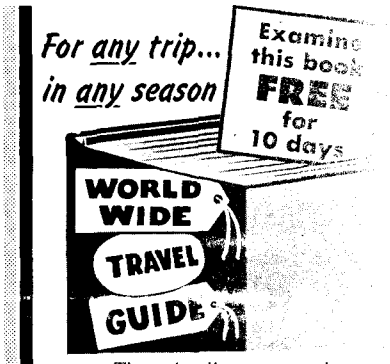
On what a stage what actors play a part —
The constant symbol-spirit of John Brown;
Lincoln and Lee, each worthy of his crown
Of kingship in the Cause that held his heart;

Battles, and fighting men — a motley host,
Cowards and brave, coarse-grained and sensitive,
Wounded by love, and healed, if they but live,
And women living on, their lovers lost!

One sympathy for Yank and Johnny Reb,
One tenderness for all their sufferings,
One song of truth and beauty as he sings —
Weaving it all in one true poet's web.

* * *

'Twas only yesterday that Benét sang
Our country's war-song in a voice so free
That all the blinded, listening, may see —
Thank God we lived when first the echoes rang!



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HEROES

FOR many years it has been the custom in the Children's Rooms of the New York Public Library to designate February as the month of heroes, perhaps because the two greatest of our Presidents were born in February. Looking back over the books of 1951 that might be added to the long list of hero stories we find excellent biographies of historical heroes but few books that tell the story of Captain Kurt Carlsen, to his legend. André Norton's adaptation of part of the Charlemagne cycle, "Huon of the Horn," is the only one that is outstanding. James Daugherty's "Of Courage Undaunted" bridges the distance in time between the legendary heroes and the still unsung heroes of today. Boys and girls, as well as men and women, thrilled last month to the story of Captain Kurt Carlson, to his courage and modesty, his complete loyalty to the great tradition of the sea. Perhaps the wisest thing that we can do just now for the younger generation is to build up in their minds the qualities that make a hero, from David in the Old Testament to the latest press bulletin. In his "Heroes and Hero Worship" Carlyle says something that has great significance today. He speaks of hero worship as ". . . the most solacing fact one sees in the world at present. There is an everlasting hope in it for the management of the world. The certainty of heroes being sent to us; our faculty, our necessity to reverence heroes when they are sent; it shines like a pole star through smoke clouds, dust clouds, and all manner of down-rushing and conflagration."

—MARY GOULD DAVIS.

MAN OF THE FAMILY. By Ralph Moody. Illustrated by Edward Shenton. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 272 pp. $3.

In the chapter called "Mrs. Callahan" in this new book about him, Little Britches is commissioned to escort thirteen cows, all of them about to calve, fifty miles along the road from Batchlett's ranch to Littleton, Colorado, where Little Britches and his family live. "Cows are a lot like people in some ways, particularly milk cows," says Little Britches. "Every one is as different from the next one as women at a sewing circle." This chapter, with its humor and its underlying pathos, shows all the qualities that make Little Britches so lovable and the two books about him so valuable. The story in this book of how he proves himself the "man of the family" is even more moving, more absorbing than the first one. Boys and girls will like it even more for the adventures that Little Britches and his brothers and sisters manage to have in spite of their responsibilities, and for his exciting times with the horses. When, in the end, his remarkable mother sets off with them all on a new adventure we have only admiration for her hard decision and pride in Little Britches for his loyalty to her. Nothing but good could come to a family that has the basic security and goodness of this family. We long to hear more of them. This record is a book to read again and again and to be grateful for.

PAUL CEZANNE. By Marion Downer. Illustrated with half-tones. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co. 177 pp. $2.50.

This is not only a delightfully written biography of the great French painter. It is, too, the story of the impressionist school of painting and its influence on nineteenth- and twentieth-century art. It begins, in the old town of Aix in Provence with Paul Cézanne's childhood and youth, bringing in his long friendship with Emile Zola and the security and happiness, in spite of his father's opposition, of his home life. It goes on then to the years in Paris and his contact with other young painters on the Left Bank.

The later part of his life, when he struggled alone to develop his ideas in his own way, is as absorbing as the days in Paris when he was one of the group that included Monet, Renoir, and Picasso. It is a particularly successful biography, successful in its background and in its analysis of a man who was responsible in large measure for one of the great movements in modern art. It is illustrated with one of Cézanne's paintings in full color and sixteen half-tones.

WASHINGTON: The Nation's First Hero. By Jeanette Eaton. Illustrated by Ralph Ray. New York: William Morrow & Co. 71 pp. $2.

This is a short yet comprehensive biography planned for the younger boys and girls, printed in a clear type with many black-and-white illustrations. In telling the story it brings out the highlights of the Revolutionary War, the making of the Constitution, and the emergence of the Republic. It shows, too, Washington's life in the early years and the development of his character through the crises of the war and as the first President. Miss Eaton's skill as a writer and her gift for just the right word lighten the story all through her book. Short as it is, she finds time to make word pictures that remain in our memory—such as the brief story of the crossing of the Delaware and the attack on Trenton. For children and for new Americans it is enlightening in relation to the world of today and its problems, showing clearly the concepts on which the United States was founded. It will have great value as a textbook for schools. It is also a book to read for pure pleasure.

CHANTICLEER OF WILDERNESS ROAD: A Story of Davy Crockett. By Meridel Le Sueur. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 160 pp. $2.50.

This is the story of David Crockett as he told it to his wife, Polly Ann Whirlwind Crockett, his children, and an old Yankee peddler on a Christmas Eve. It is, too, the saga of the defense of the Alamo and David

—By Aldren A. Watson, from "Chanticleer."

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Crockett's heroic death. Told in the idiom of pioneer America, it is like a folktale in its freshness and vigor. It is illustrated with drawings by Aldren A. Watson, printed in black and green.

LEIF ERICKSON, EXPLORER. By Ruth Cromer Weir. Illustrated by Harve Stein. Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. 128 *pp.* $1.50.

LEIF ERIKSSON: First Voyager to America. By Katherine B. Shippen. New York: Harper & Bros. 150 *pp.* $2.

All the color and adventure of the Vikings is encompassed in Mrs. Weir's fascinating story of Leif the Lucky. Based on the Greenland version of the "Flatey Book," the story opens with a description of Leif's family and the exploits of his father, Eric the Red, including his banishment from Iceland and his discovery of Greenland. It shows vividly the life of the Vikings—their hunt for food, for grass for their cattle, the scarcity of wood, the importance of "The Thing" in settling disputes and in establishing law and order. The actual journey to Vinland is described in some detail. Mrs. Weir has used authentic material from the sagas to sustain her story, and the result is both dramatic and informative. Boys and girls will surely enjoy this robust tale.

Miss Shippen bases her story on the Karlsefin Saga. She has written a novel for young people that is sensitive, imaginative, and intriguing. It is the story of Leif and his father, of his mother, Thorkild, and of his wife, Gudrid. It is filled with thrilling descriptions of terrific storms and dangerous voyages. It describes the life of the early Vikings and gives reality to names in the history books. It tells of the discovery of Vinland, and it shows Leif, in his old age, musing on the future of that land.

A third book about the Vikings has recently been published by Doubleday: "Leif the Lucky," a re-issue of D'Aulaire's story of the Norseman for younger children, illustrated in color.

—MARIAN AND RALPH BROWN.

STORIES OF OUR AMERICAN PATRIOTIC SONGS. By Dr. John Henry Lyons. Illustrated by Jacob Landau. New York: Vanguard Press. 72 *pp.* $2.75.

Dr. Lyons, who is director of musical education for the Pasadena schools, tells here the story of ten of America's national songs, beginning with "The Star-Spangled Banner" and ending with "America the Beautiful." His style is informal and friendly,

—*By Jacob Landau, from "Stories of American Patriotic Songs."*

warmed with feeling for America and for its music. In each case the song, with music, follows its history. The black-and-white illustrations by Jacob Landau are excellent.

Landmark Books

By MERRITT P. ALLEN

THESE are Landmark Books, and like all in this series each is a factual introduction to the subject treated. They are doors ajar that give onto wide vistas which young readers may explore if this glimpse invites them. Published by Random House, these books sell for $1.50. The illustrations and format are excellent.

THE STORY OF THE U. S. MARINES. By George Hunt. Illustrated by Charles Mazoujian. 182 *pp.*

This story of the United States Marines is just that. It recounts the growth of the Marine Corps in size and importance from the American Revolution to today. It packs a good deal of stirring detail into a small space, giving not only a comprehensive outline of the Corps's history but relating many of its thrilling exploits on land, sea, and in the air in almost every part of the world. It is a proud story, but the author, a Marine officer himself, sets it down with modest restraint in a straightforward style that is a pleasure to read. It is a splendid book. Any American boy should delight in it. If he keeps it for reference, he will appreciate its index.

CUSTER'S LAST STAND. By Quentin Reynolds. Illustrated by Frederick C. Chapman. 185 *pp.*

This is a deceptive title as only a small part of the book deals with Custer's tragic fight. It is the story of General Custer's life from the time he was four years old. Too much of it is given to unimportant details and too little to the great events in which he participated. There are chapters on his uninteresting boyhood, yet only two battles of the Civil War are mentioned and then only briefly. His Indian fighting is more fully touched on, but with a too obvious effort to make him a shining hero for small boys. Often the author makes the mistake of writing down to his readers, stooping to explain things they already know and giving them too few opportunities to reach up and grow.

THE PIRATE LAFITTE AND THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS. By Robert Tallant. Illustrated by John Chase. 186 *pp.*

Here in very readable form are all the main facts about the Lafitte brothers, Pierre and Jean. Whether they were pirates or privateers is not established. They were certainly more picturesque, intelligent, and courageous than most men. For years Jean was the absolute ruler of a thousand men, the Baratarians, who lived in the swamps below New Orleans and car-

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Susan and Michael Henchard, in "The Mayor of Casterbridge," by Thomas Hardy. 2. Lady Dedlock and Sir Leicester Dedlock, in "Bleak House," by Charles Dickens. 3. Isabel Linton and Heathcliff, in "Wuthering Heights," by Emily Brontë. 4. Laura Fairlie and Sir Percival Glyde, in "The Woman in White," by Wilkie Collins. 5. Dorothea Brooke and Mr. Casaubon, in "Middlemarch," by George Eliot. 6. Becky Sharp and Rawdon Crawley, in "Vanity Fair," by William Thackeray. 7. Diana Merion and Augustus Warwick, in "Diana of the Crossways," by George Meredith. 8. Bertha Mason and Edward Rochester, in "Jane Eyre," by Charlotte Brontë. 9. Alison Graeme and Henry Durie, in "The Master of Ballantrae," by Robert Louis Stevenson. 10. Amy Robsart and the Earl of Leicester, in "Kenilworth," by Sir Walter Scott.

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ried on a fabulous business as smugglers and, possibly, as pirates. He lived like a king and ruled his domain justly. The most select social circles welcomed him until, after the United States took over, public opinion changed and he and his men were outlawed. Then a British fleet and army came up the river and every man—white, black, and red—rallied to defend the city. The Baratarians were there to the last man. It is quite possible that they won the Battle of New Orleans for Andrew Jackson. At any rate they became heroes and were made citizens in good standing by the President of the United States. This is an authentic and well-written account of one of the most colorful episodes in our history. The background is so skilfully handled that events fall naturally into their proper perspective, leaving a lasting impression of the period.

THE SANTA FE TRAIL. By Samuel Hopkins Adams. Illustrated by Lee J. Ames. 181 *pp.*

This gives a pretty good picture of that historical highlight in the days of wagon-trains. It might have pleased some readers if more space had been given to the earlier pack trains, which were picturesque in themselves and highly important in establishing that route of commerce and conquest. Much of the Trail's history, geography, and general atmosphere is condensed in one expedition commanded by Captain William Beckneld in 1822. His experiences were typical of time and place, and in the careful description of them lies this book's worth. The day-by-day life on the Trail, with descriptions of how camps were made, wagons loaded, streams forded, Indians pacified or fought, and many other essential details are faithfully pictured, as are the grim battles against heat and thirst. It is a well written book. It should stimulate a desire to know

more about the old road and the part it played in the history of our country.

THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION. By Richard L. Neuberger. Illustrated by Winold Reiss. 180 *pp.*

This reviewer has seldom read a more worthwhile non-fiction book for young people than this retelling of the story of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Abbreviated as it must be in a book of this length, there is enough of the record and its background to answer the questions usually asked by boys and girls who are unfamiliar with it. The characters stand out as individuals. They are heroes, but the author has skilfully avoided letting that detract from them as human beings. The importance of what they did and the magnitude of the land they explored have been emphasized with no undue beating of drums. Good taste and good style pay honest tribute to one of the most gallant companies that ever marched under any flag.

THE PANAMA CANAL. By Robert Considine. Illustrated by Fritz Kredel. 179 *pp.*

Nearly every practical long-range thinker from Columbus to Theodore Roosevelt gave more or less serious thought to a waterway across the Isthmus of Panama. This book tells who they were, what they dreamed, and what they accomplished. The heroic failure of DeLesseps is recorded in considerable detail, as is the victory of the Americans, Gorgas and Goethals, although too little is said about the conquest of yellow fever. Perhaps that is a whole book in itself. Precanal routes are also described; the first by small boat and mule train, then by the Panama Railroad of California gold rush days. One picturesque episode is omitted—the march of Henry Morgan and his buccaneers across "the bridge of the world." That, too is another book. This book is well written and contains all the facts and figures necessary to an understanding of the why, when, and how of the big ditch.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 933)

CHRISTOPHER LAFARGE: *SONNET*

(From "The Harvard Advocate Anthology") (In apology for a curious handwriting)
[Lady,] I know my curlicues perplex, . . .
But rapid letters to the gentler sex
Do not conduce to a fine, flowing screed. . . .
Imagination makes the pen to wobble,
And hasty expurgation of what's said
Lames the poor thoughts as slow they outward hobble.

AUTHOR'S DOUBLE LIFE

(*Continued from page* 14)

that in which a writer about to lay a story in New Orleans will provide himself with a guidebook to the city. Nor is this experience unique; Lincoln Barnett (to name only one) started reading about relativity in order intelligently to conduct an interview with Dr Einstein, and found himself an authority, with a book on the new cosmology on his hands.

FROM what I know of my fellow-workers I think most of them have followed some similar *cursus honorem;* bit parts on smaller magazines or newspapers, the simultaneous improvement of technique, and general knowledge that lead into the book field. In the beginning stages free-lancing is not an easy road. The percentage of rejections is high, the reasons for them seem capricious, and the bills are always due. I would imagine that the majority of writers never passed through the beginning free-lance stage, but serve their apprenticeship in the shadow of some job. A good many more never escape from it. Why, then, do we do it? What do we get out of it?

The reasons may be various, but I imagine they could be summed up in the single word independence. The knowledge that one's income, and such intangible satisfactions as are provided by public acclaim and a feeling of achievement, are limited only by one's own energy and ability. Freedom to work the hours of one's choosing and very little direction but what is self-imposed. Freedom to write about what subjects one pleases and to say what one pleases about them.

To be sure there are limitations on all these, and they begin to appear most pointedly when the free-lance crosses the magic frontier into book writing. The chances are that the first-book writer, even in fiction, will suffer a severe disappointment both in public reception and sales volume, and will be brought face to face with the fact that the publisher put out this turkey in order to get him on the list with the hope that he might some day produce a highly salable item. Bernard DeVoto has recently commented on the fact that if a non-fiction book on which six or seven years of research and labor have been spent sells 10,000 copies, well above the average, the writer's income from it will be $6,000.

Does this mean that it isn't worth the trouble except for spiritual satisfaction? No. As the book business in

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America is set up these days, almost nobody is making any money out of it except the printers and the two-bit houses which shave royalties to the vanishing point. It is an economic fact that you cannot normally make a living writing books. But it is also an economic fact that the moment the professional writer—I mean one who has no other profession—begins to write books, he also begins to lead a double life. The income from his book is a disappointment unless he happens to be struck by lightning in the form of a book club or Hollywood; the income that really matters comes from the by-products and in all sorts of forms. Lectures, assignments from the big slicks, a job for a syndicate, stories sold in advance after a talk with an editor, jobs for radio or TV.

The odd part of it is that in most cases the free-lance who attempts to sit down on this new affluence finds he cannot afford to do it. One book is not enough; the calls from the lecture circuit stop coming, the big slicks return to their normal cranky, difficult-to-please attitude, there are no more editorial lunches—unless another book comes out and gets discussed in the reviews and public places.

Now I am perfectly well aware that there are a hundred exceptions to this rake's progress. Increasingly today, writers who have done a book or two and demonstrated their capacity for continuing the process become staff men or semi-staff men on a magazine. Editors are constantly trying to institutionalize their free-lancers, and there is nothing unholy about it. They want a man who can do a given job in a given way, interpret a situation in line with the magazine's editorial policy, provide a story with a type of twist for which the magazine has become known. In fiction it is to a magazine's advantage to keep using the same writers. But this tendency has produced the progressive decline of the free-lance writer; it has forced him into the position of doing continually more uneconomic work on books in order to maintain his position as a free-lance, or else abandoning the very independence for which he became one.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE CORPSE DIED TWICE *Barbara Frost* (*Coward-McCann*: $2.50)	Bibulous artist cyanided in Coney Island Turkish bath; lady lawyer and cops leap-frog two more victims to snag killer.	Also in cast: Ad-man, merry-go-round operators, insurance agent, model; honest but kaleidoscopic job.	Placid
STAMPED FOR MURDER *Ben Benson* (Mill-Morrow: $2.50)	Philatelic dealer canceled in lakeside shack; state and city police (U. S., unlocated) combine talents to surcharge killer.	Rather plodding piece, given over largely to Q&A treatment of principals (a mixed bag, M&F).	Thin-spun
DIPLOMAT'S FOLLY *Henry Wade* (Mill-Morrow: $2.50)	French and British police throw expense accounts to winds when indiscreet envoy gets neck busted.	Slow-paced at outset, yarn gains pace in homestretch and speeds to photo-finish.	Satisfactory
MRS. McGINTY'S DEAD *Agatha Christie* (Dodd, Mead: $2.50)	English village char pole-axed, local boy convicted, kindly cops have doubts, and Hercule Poirot agitates little gray cells.	Characteristically tricky; surfeit of potentials confusing, but old fire burns brightly at moments.	Not among her best
TREAD LIGHTLY, ANGEL *Frederick C. Davis* (Crime Club: $2.50)	N. Y. private-eye duo tail distraught gal at sire's behest; find blackmail, hijacking, suicide, murder, and answer all in 24 hours.	Personnel largely incredible; flowery style irritating; horror angle overworked.	No must
DIVINING ROD FOR MURDER *Margot Neville* (Crime Club: $2.50)	Australian lady tutor takes job in spotty household; wealthy spinster vanishes, supposedly on trip, but teacher has doubts.	Plotting ingenious, but suspense sequences grow top-heavy as heroine insists on playing lone hand.	Tenuous

—SERGEANT CUFF.

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BELLES-LETTRES

(*Continued from page 29*)

tern of her life emerges in a clear picture.

Norman Douglas calls her "almost the last of our lady authors"; she was, as well, almost the last of the English lady eccentrics. Merely to record the events of her life is to record a fascinating story, and Miss Bigland does just that. Occasionally when her writing is banal or purple, it seems so much like Ouida's that we forgive the biographer for taking on the coloration of her subject. We are thankful, at least, that she skilfully weaves together all her varied sources. For in this biography, oddly enough, we are treated to the kind of glamorous excitement that Ouida's novels gave to the readers of her own day.

Belles-Lettres Notes

LETTERS TO BENVENUTA. By Rainer Maria Rilke. Translated by Heinz Norden. Philosophical Library. $2.75. In January 1914 Rainer Maria Rilke was deeply immersed in one of his periodic doldrums of morbidity when a letter arrived from a young woman-pianist, Magda von Hattingberg, who expressed warm appreciation for his volume of fantasies called "Tales of the Dear Lord God." The thirty-nine-year-old Rilke, recently estranged from his wife, opened the flood gates of his mind and soul, hailing her as his Benvenuta (welcome arrival), and gradually allowed his salutation-endearments to increase from dear friend to sister, child, and virgin mother. They met and were in constant ethereal contact until June of that year. When Rilke proposed that they make their relationship permanent she declined, fearing to destroy her image of Rilke as a saint and apparition from heaven in favor of a neurotic earthling; Benvenuta, unlike several other women, wanted to memorialize the poet and not wash his linen. She was deeply disturbed by his glorification of "doubt, fear, renunciation, resignation. Where is life's Yes . . ." Interestingly enough, she felt this way about Rilke at the time he was at work on his magnificent "Duino Elegies," which he intended as an "Affirmation of Life-AND-death." The platonic affair exhausted both parties and is described at length by Magda von Hattingberg in her "Rilke and Benvenuta" (Norton, 1949), which should be read in order to derive the most from the present "Letters to Benvenuta."

The handful of letters now published with an introduction by Louis Untermeyer chronologically span the month before the actual meeting of Rilke and his Benvenuta. These letters emphasize what already is apparent in his other voluminous correspondence: compassion with human problems in general and inability to cope with his own circumstances and an absolute dedication to poetry. The latter is evident in moving statements like "there may be no need for anyone to lay my funeral pyre, since I myself have touched the torch of ecstasy to my unblemished heart, that it consume itself utterly and flare up in a single flame to God." By "God" Rilke meant a personal image and concept which he envisions in his poetry, rejecting institutional religion. Readers of the "Duino Elegies" will find that the February 8 letter of this collection previews in prose the brilliant poetic statements in regard to human relationship and parting of the second Elegy. Like Emily Dickinson, Rilke found that he could best communicate with the outer world in poems and by letter writing, being unable otherwise, in Rilke's own words, "to bind the heart's powers to human beings." These letters, though few, eloquently reflect the creative power of "a poet's poet."

—SIEGFRIED MANDEL.

RHYTHM IN THE NOVEL. By E. K. Brown. University of Toronto Press. $3. These four connected essays, the last production of Professor Brown, were delivered by him as the Alexander Lectures at the University of Toronto, and aside from their intrinsic worth they point up how great a loss to contemporary criticism his untimely death was. His concern in these essays is the element of the novel which gives that protean form its distinction. Like music, a novel is strung out on a beam of time; it cannot be apprehended in an instant—as a lyric or a painting can. Hence it must embody devices which unify its parts and give them meaningful resonance.

Professor Brown, in his first essays, deals with the elements of phrase, character, and incident—the simplest devices. Then there are the "expanding symbols," dynamic symbols which undergo change and expansion as the novel progresses; examples are the hay in Forster's "Howard's End" and the phrase of Vinteuil's music in Proust's great novel. The third device is the interweaving themes; "The Professor's House" and "War and Peace" make prominent use of it. And in the final essay the analysis of "A Passage to India" shows the various rhythmic devices exemplified in one masterly novel. The writing in these essays is notably graceful, and the ideas luminously clear. Though modest in scope they are a definite contribution to the esthetics of the novel.

—ROBERT HALSBAND.

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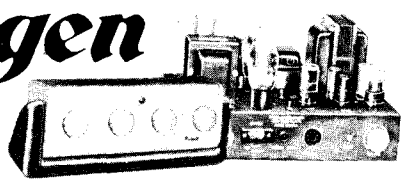

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On the Record

A Personal Choice by Edward Tatnall Canby

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER RECORD NUMBER NUMBER OF RECORDS	*Recording Technique, Surface* ENGINEERING	PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT

GRAND MIXTURE

DEBUSSY: THREE "IMAGES" ("GIGUES," "IBERIA," "RONDES DE PRINTEMPS"). San Francisco Symphony, Monteux.
RCA Victor LM 1197

▶ Seldom performed in concert as a unit, these make an excellent LP, fulfilling at last Debussy's original conception, bringing out the intended relationships (though composed at different times). Three variants of special Debussy folk idiom technique: English ("The Keel Row"), Spanish, and French. Rather forthright playing, not as delicately atmospheric as, say, Franz André's Debussy. Fine recording except for RCA's usual thinnish bass. (See also Ansermet's on London LLP 44; it wasn't sent to me.)

BACH: SIX ORGAN TRIO SONATAS. Helmut Walcha. (Schnitger organ at Cappel; Small Organ, St. Jakobi, Lubeck.)
Decca DX 114 (2, boxed)
BACH: FIVE ORGAN CHORALE PRELUDES (SCHUBLER). Helmut Walcha. (Organs as above).
Decca DL 9569

▶ Recorded "baroque" organ takes a big jump ahead with this series, by notable blind German organist, to cover entire Bach literature. Excellent playing and registration, beautifully recorded (except some distortion on inner LP bands). The organs date in part from Bach's day, with wealth of those nasal, exotic, xylophone-like tone colors that are such a revelation to us. Complex Bach scores come through with utter clarity and astonishing variety, from work to work; "a child could understand them." St. Jakobi organ is the sharper, clearer instrument as recorded, the Schnitger more massive, bit more distant. (Strange effect—sometimes the "quint" stop, 8va-and-a-5th, overbalances its fundamental, the melody sounding a fifth too high. Possibly due to mike placing?)

MUSIC FROM "THE RIVER" (sound track recording).
Polymusic PRLP 5003

▶ Beautifully recorded (probably taped), this is interesting collection of fades-in-and-out from the film, with some spoken text. Fine for those who saw the show; others may find it a trace synthetic, à la Hollywood. Native musicians are too cultivated (Western-style), the voices smacking faintly of Westernized training, as opposed to the universal nasal Eastern screech! I might be wrong; just a hunch.

FOUR OVERTURES: GLUCK ("Alceste," "Iph. in Aulis") AND SPOHR ("Faust," "Jessonda"). Assorted Orchs.
Urania URLP 7028

▶ Feature of this pot-pourri is Spohr. The two opera overtures, "Faust" of 1818 and "Jessonda" of 1823, show unusual freshness and musical competency, remarkably forward-looking style and technique for the time. Nearest to Weber in style (but these are earlier); few of us could tell "Faust" from Weber himself; interesting foretastes of Schumann, Mendelssohn, early Wagner as well. Musically, if roughly, done by Radio Berlin Symphony under Goerlich.

MOZART: PIANO CONCERTO #25 IN C, K. 503. Carl Seemann; Munich Philharmonic, Fritz Lehmann.
Decca DL 9568

▶ Rather distant, unspectacular mike pickup takes this out of the "hi-fi" category, but Mozart listeners will not mind a bit. Level is rather low (bringing up surface noise somewhat).

Must be Fritz Lehmann who puts so much life and style into this handsomely baroque concerto, as compared to much heavy Bavarian playing. Seemann's piano is staccato, light, as for Mozart piano—good.

LISZT: "TODTENTANZ." FRANCK: "SYMPHONIC VARIATIONS." Brailowsky; RCA Victor Symphony, Reiner, Morel.
RCA Victor LM 1195

▶ Lots of low pitch music here, all very loud; strange that with so much overtone content in loud, low notes, lack of true bass isn't as noticeable. This LP is thinnish, like others in RCA series, but it doesn't matter much, to the ear.

Maybe Brailowsky's thunder is what Liszt ordered but I suspect Death could thunder more musically. Franck is nice in soft parts, noisy and hard in loud. (Good orch. backing.)

MACKERRAS: "PINEAPPLE POLL." (Ballet score from Gilbert & Sullivan operas) a) Sadler's Wells Orchestra, Mackerras.
Columbia ML 4439
b) Royal Opera House Orch., Lanchbery.
Decca DL 7521 (10")

▶ The Columbia version (with more music) is a British EMI LP, with unboosted highs, heavier bass than U.S. normal; adjust controls accordingly. Biggish-orch. sound. The Decca has closer, more sprightly hi-fi sound; I like it better myself, all-around. (See also RCA version, LM 1224.)

G & S fans will go mad trying to identify the hundreds of familiar tunes, tricked up in snazzy modern ballet style for this score! Musically not much choice betw. these. Both claim, confusingly, to represent Sadler's Wells.

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By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS

A. A lady's skirt of any stiff material.

B. Eastern branch of ancient Teutonic race that overran Europe.

C. To withdraw an accusation, a promise, or the like.

D. A roofed gateway to a churchyard (2 wds.).

E. Ancient Roman colony in Spain; now manufacturing city.

F. Of a financial structure, overcapitalized (comp.).

G. English poet and humorist (1799-1845; "Song of the Shirt").

H. To use artifice in avoidance.

I. To receive punishment or something disagreeable (2 wds.; colloq.).

J. Pertaining to ancient Troy.

K. A kind of brass or brass alloy, hammered into thin sheets, formerly used for church utensils.

L. An aperitif.

M. A formal, dignified discourse in public (Cicero wrote 57 such extant).

WORDS

C 27 R 47 I 105 N 91 O 135 L 141 I 130 A 102 E 11
O 94 S 131 T 52 R 171 O 108 O 69 O 85 H 121 H 34
R 1 E 64 T 120 R 147 A 125 C 155 T 31
A 16 L 156 C 92 H 111 O 62 A 70 T 20 E 176
E 139 C 115 I 158 U 42 A 119
T 137 O 132 P 59 H 118 E 37 A 114 V 124 Y 33
H 82 O 165 O 170 O 149
E 83 V 157 A 56 _ 142 E 112
O 23 E 107 T 163 I 2 T 172
I 160 L 25 I 167 A 148 E 84
L 150 A 174 I 145 T 117 E 93 N 38
A 78 P 12 P 104 E 128 T 99 I 24 Z 161 E 151 R 60
O 140 O 63 A 35 T 73 I 164 O 46 L 86

DEFINITIONS

N. A leading character in "Pirates of Penzance".

O. Irish-born sculptor in the U. S. (1833-94; bronze of Abraham Pierson on Yale campus, etc.).

P. One of two dogs in a painting by Sir Edwin Landseer (2 wds.).

Q. Peak in Colorado, 14,260 ft. high, site of Inter-University High-Altitude Laboratory.

R. City in Bulgaria, strategically important stronghold, surrendered to Russia, 1878.

S. Out of one's charge or care (3 wds.).

T. A totality of related parts.

U. Pertaining to the fragrant sandarac tree of Morocco or its wood.

V. The seat of Dartmouth College.

W. Colored poet of 18th century, popular prodigy in New England.

X. To remove to a higher category (biol.).

Y. A kind of rocker or hobby-horse for a small child.

Z. To free oneself from (2 wds.).

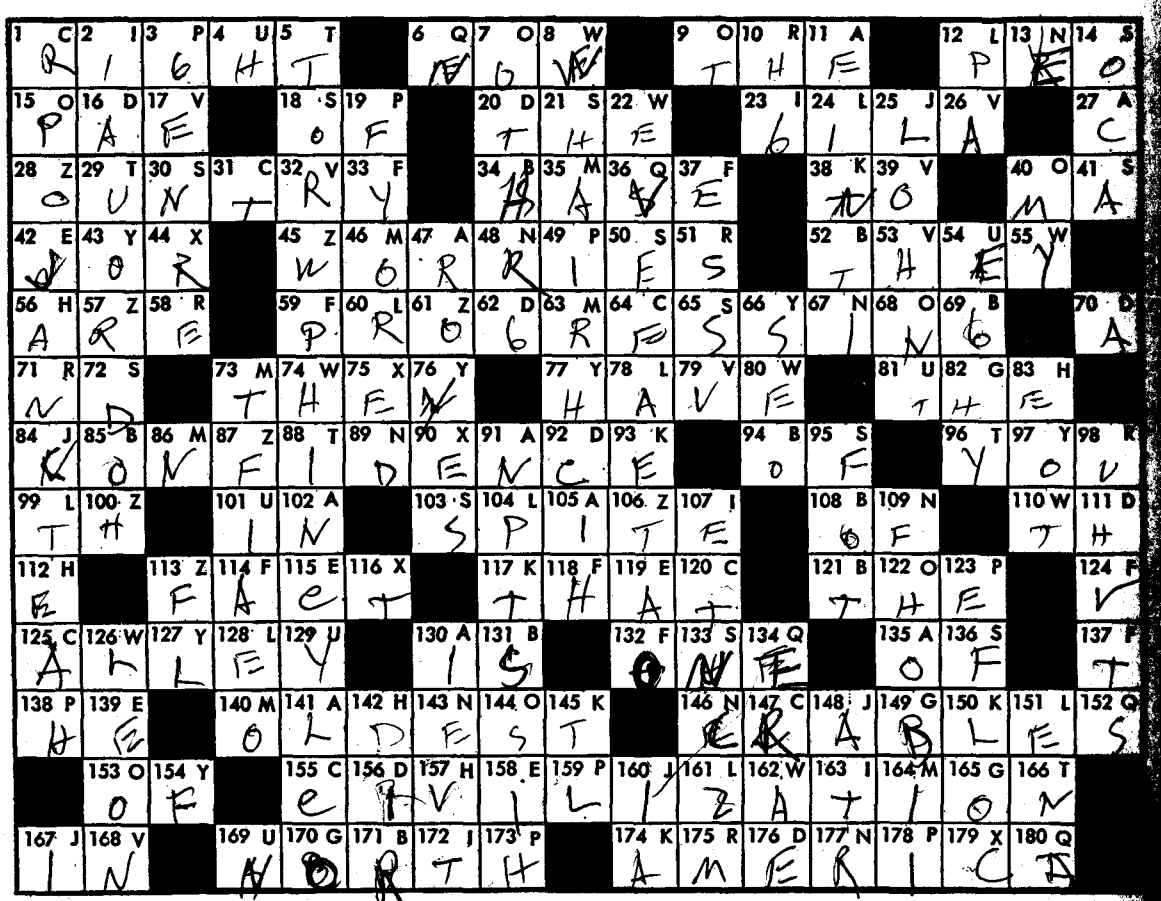
WORDS

F 109 R 177 I 13 D 89 E 143 R 48 I 67 C 146
T 9 H 122 O 7 M 40 P 15 S 144 O 153 N 68
H 138 I 178 O 3 H 173 L 159 I 49 E 19 E 123
E 134 V 36 A 180 N 6 S 152
S 51 _ 10 U 98 M 175 E 58 N 71
O 14 F 136 F 95 O 18 N 133 E 50 S 103 H 21 A 41 V 30 O 72 S 65
H 29 N 166 I 88 T 5 Y 96
T 81 H 4 V 129 I 101 N 169 E 54
H 53 A 26 A 168 D 39 V 79 E 17 R 32
N 8 H 74 E 22 A 162 T 110 L 126 E 80 V 55
E 90 R 44 E 75 C 179 T 116
O 66 H 77 O 97 O 43 F 154 L 127 Y 76
T 106 H 100 R 57 O 61 W 45 O 28 E 87 E 113

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in, you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 54 of this issue.

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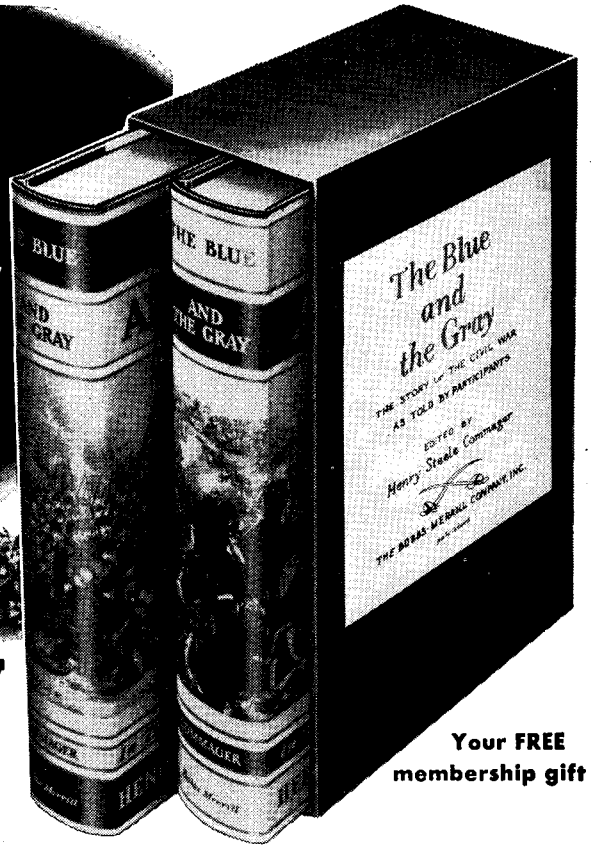

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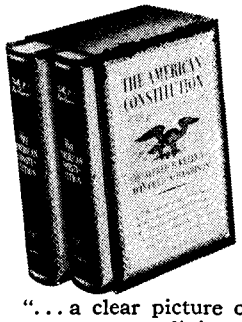

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